US009365334B2

(12) **United States Patent**
Christopoulos et al.

(10) **Patent No.: US 9,365,334 B2**
(45) **Date of Patent: Jun. 14, 2016**

(54) **BEVERAGE CONTAINER WITH REMOVABLE COVER**

(71) Applicant: **MIDEAS, INC.**, Costa Mesa, CA (US)

(72) Inventors: **James Christopoulos**, Tustin, CA (US); **Martin Todd Belle**, Tustin, CA (US); **David Huang**, Torrance, CA (US); **Fernando Pardo**, Moorpark, CA (US); **Adil Ali**, Newbury, CA (US); **Matthew Hern**, Malibu, CA (US); **Etienne Iliffe-Moon**, Sherman Oaks, CA (US); **Praveen Penmetsa**, Torrance, CA (US); **Matthew O'Brien**, Hermosa Beach, CA (US)

(73) Assignee: **Mideas, LLC**, Costa Mesa, CA (US)

(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 192 days.

(21) Appl. No.: **14/272,327**

(22) Filed: **May 7, 2014**

(65) **Prior Publication Data**

US 2014/0238994 A1 Aug. 28, 2014

Related U.S. Application Data

(63) Continuation-in-part of application No. 13/669,363, filed on Nov. 5, 2012, now Pat. No. 8,939,311.

(60) Provisional application No. 61/968,274, filed on Mar. 20, 2014, provisional application No. 61/916,049, filed on Dec. 13, 2013.

(51) **Int. Cl.**
B65D 39/08 (2006.01)
B65D 51/28 (2006.01)
(Continued)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC ***B65D 51/28*** (2013.01); ***B65D 17/163*** (2013.01); ***B65D 81/3216*** (2013.01); *B65D 2517/0046* (2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
CPC B65D 51/247; B65D 51/246; B65D 51/28; B65D 81/32
USPC 220/321, 522; 215/6, 10
See application file for complete search history.

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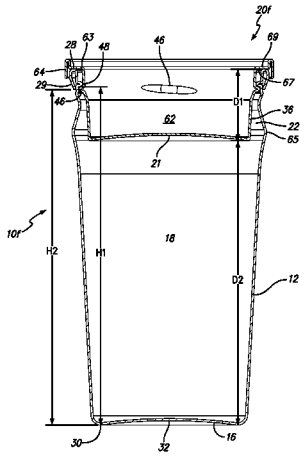
Primary Examiner — King M Chu
(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm* — Jeffer Mangels; Butler & Mitchell LLP; Brennan C. Swain, Esq.

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A beverage container that includes a main body portion having an open top and a closed bottom, an interior, a circular rim and a first set of threads on an inside surface thereof that are positioned adjacent the rim at a first height. The rim includes a downwardly depending portion that extends below the first set of threads. The container also includes a removable cover with a bottom, a generally cylindrical side wall, an annular flange extending outwardly from the generally cylindrical side wall and an annular collar. The collar, the annular flange and the side wall define a first channel that receives the rim, and the bottom and the generally cylindrical side wall cooperate to define a cover cavity. The side wall includes a second set of threads on an outside surface thereof that are matingly engaged with the first set of threads.

13 Claims, 27 Drawing Sheets



(51) **Int. Cl.**
B65D 17/00 (2006.01)
B65D 81/32 (2006.01)

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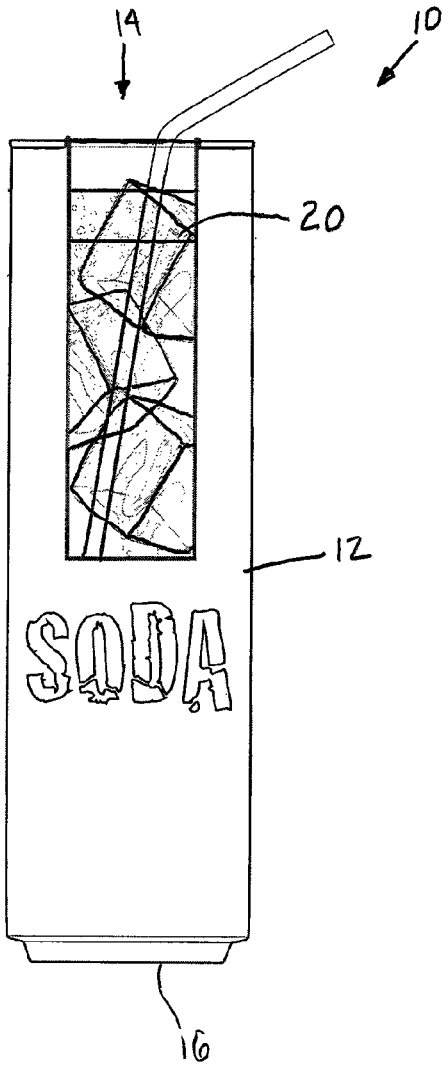


FIG. 1

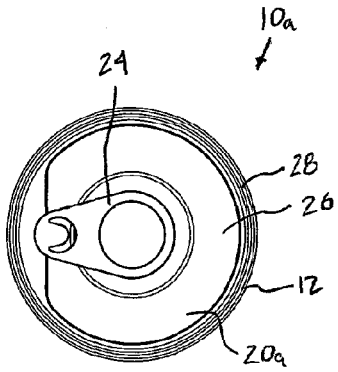


FIG. 2

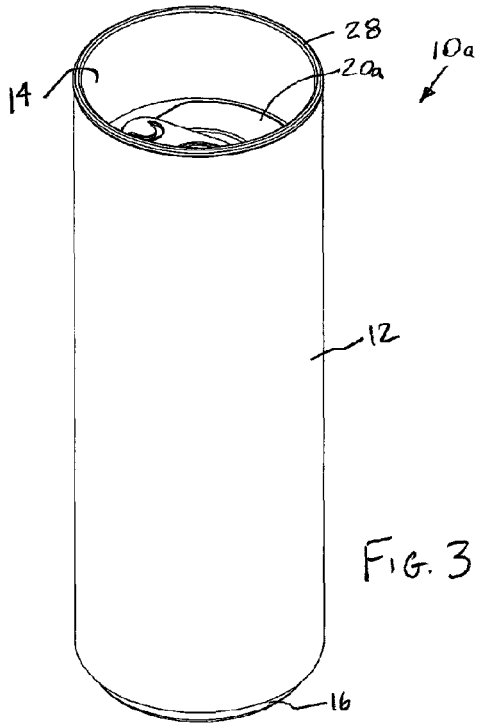
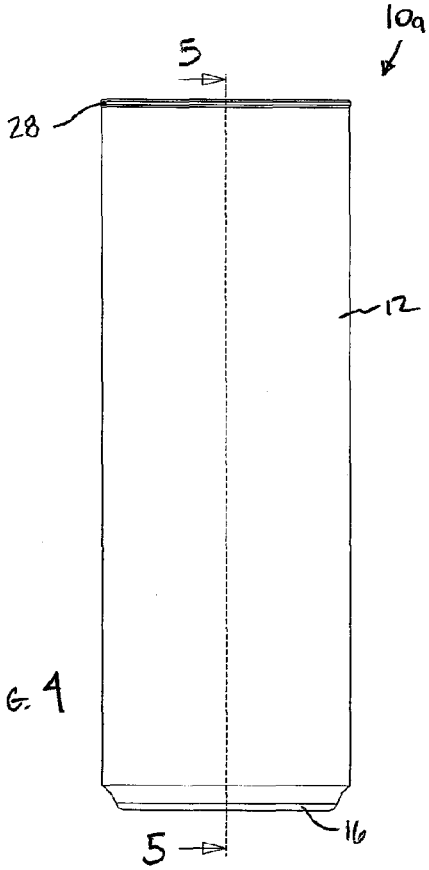


FIG. 3



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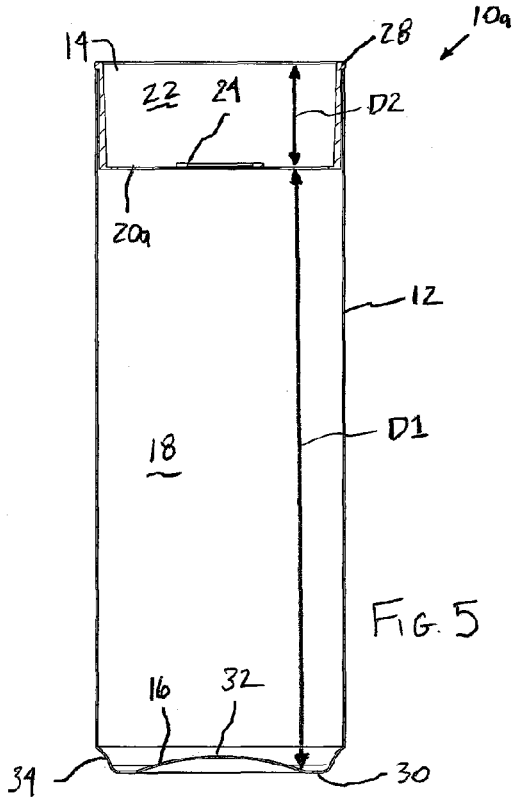

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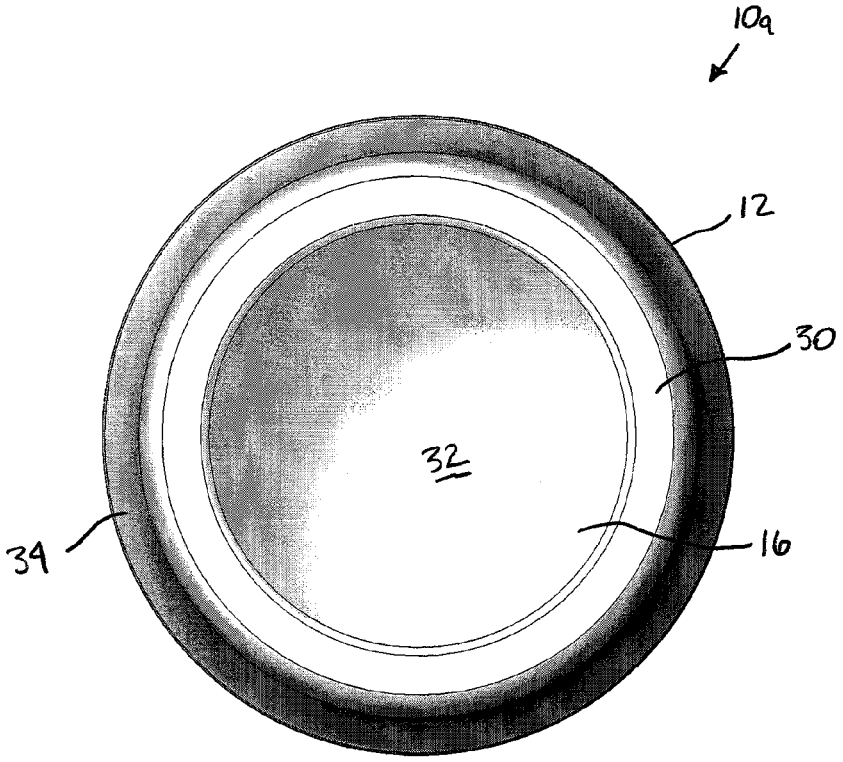

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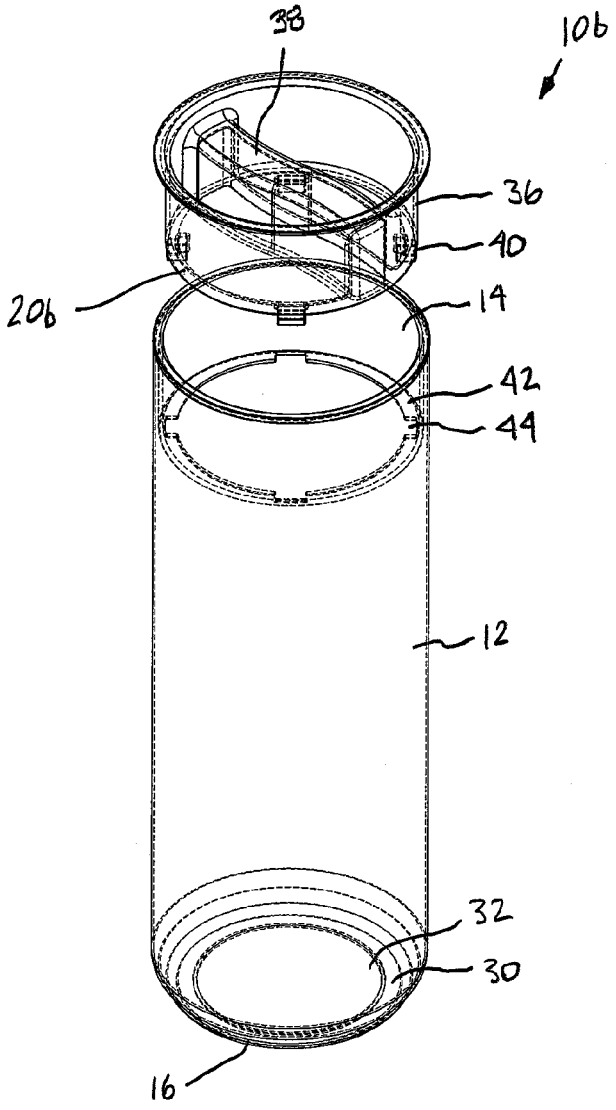

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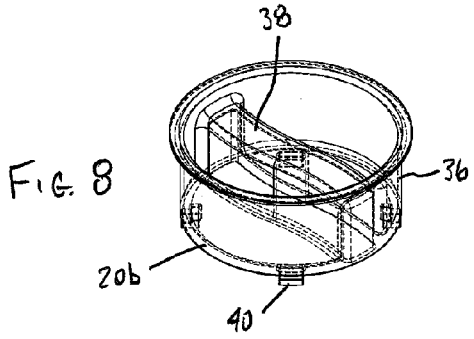

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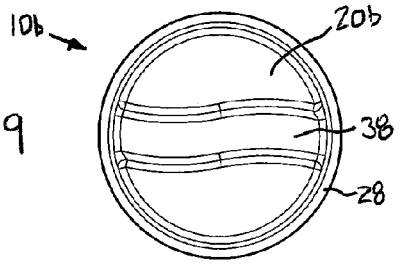

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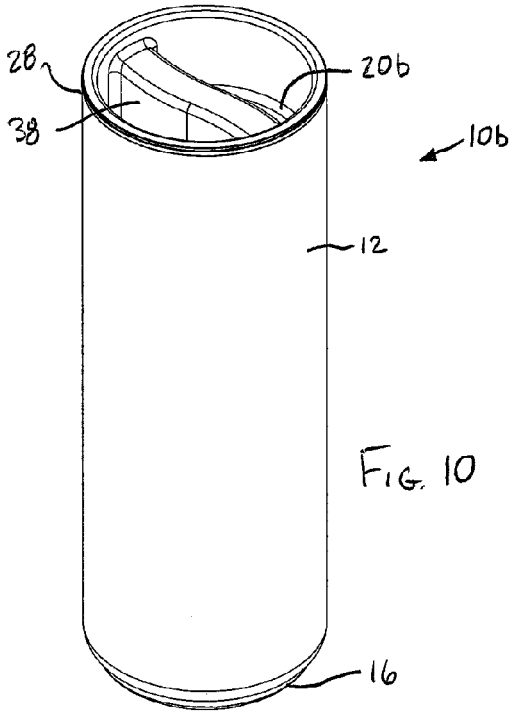

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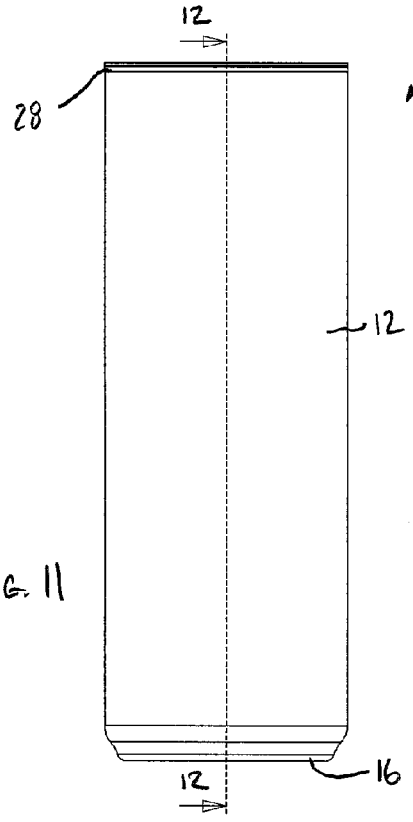

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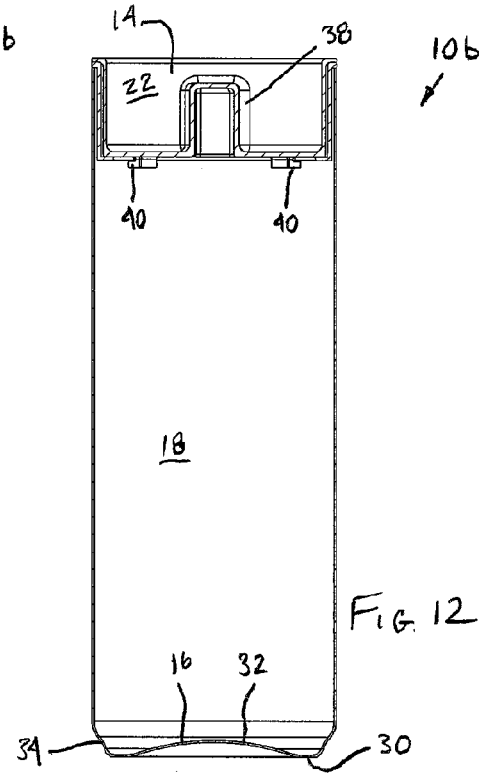

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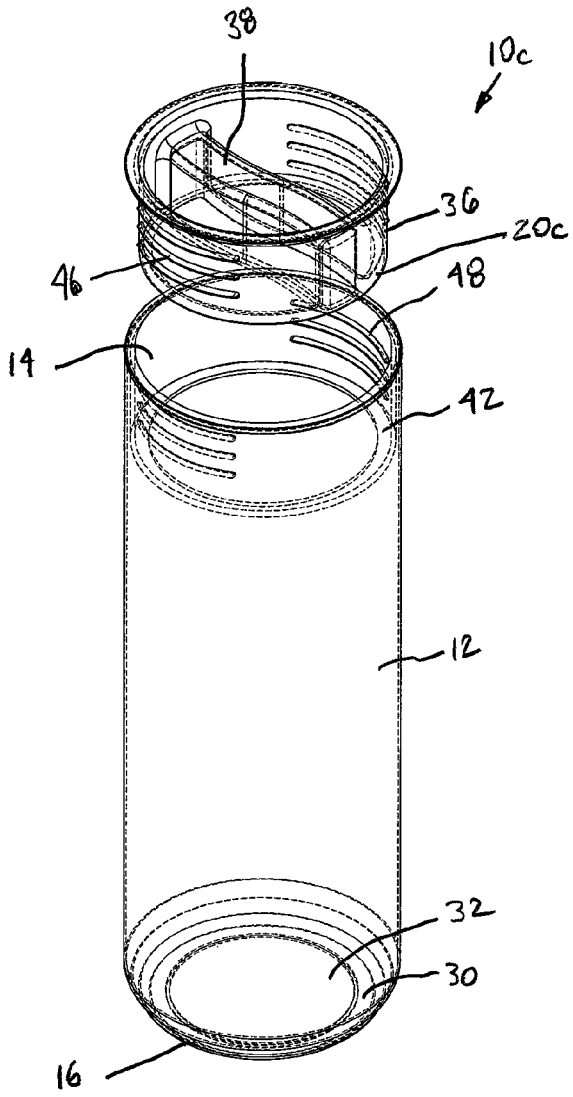

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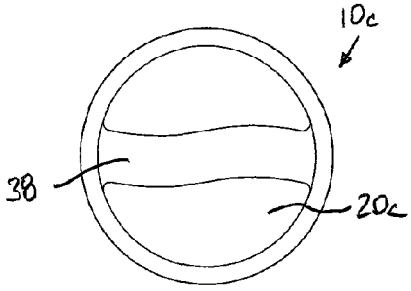

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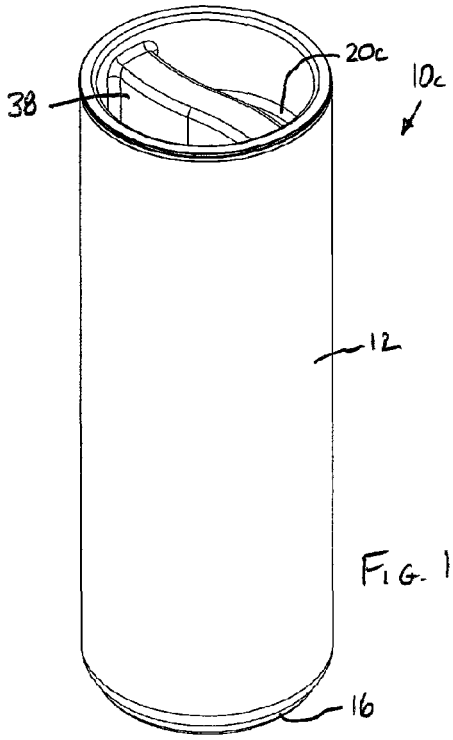

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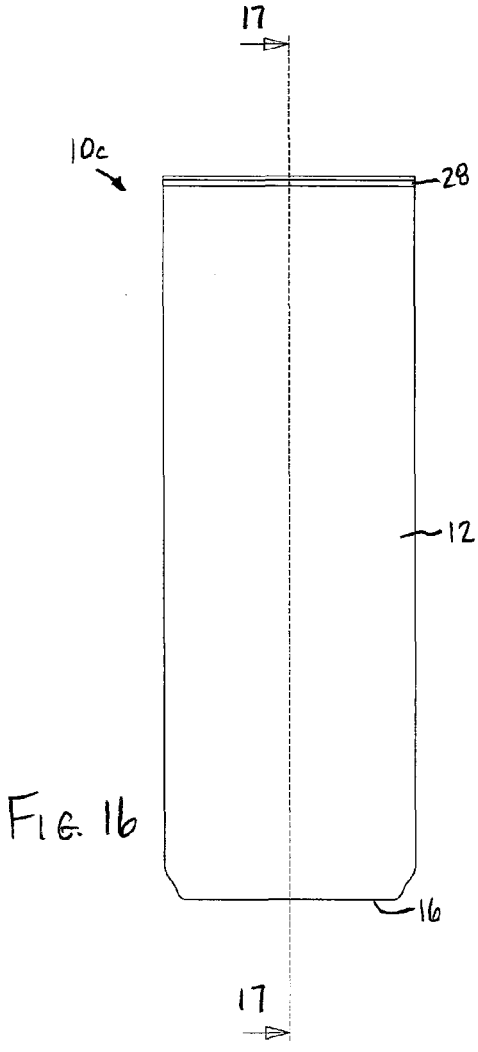

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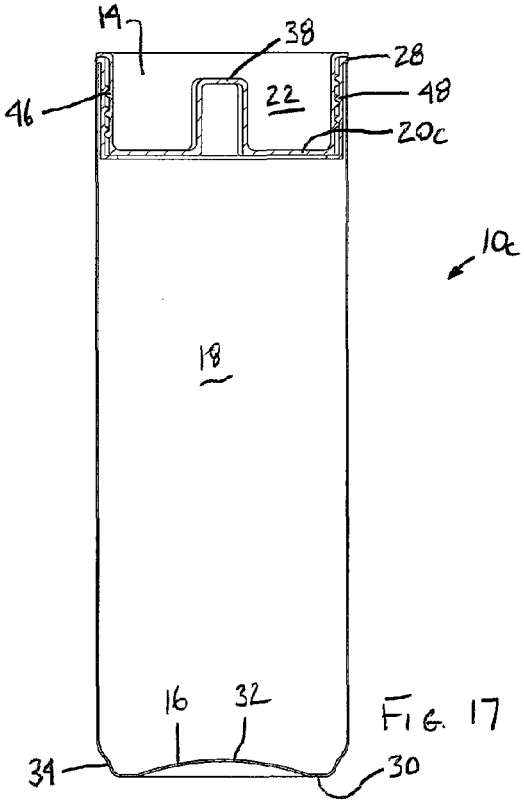

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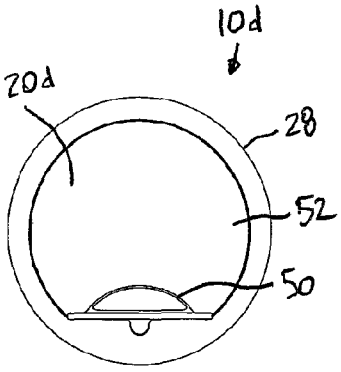

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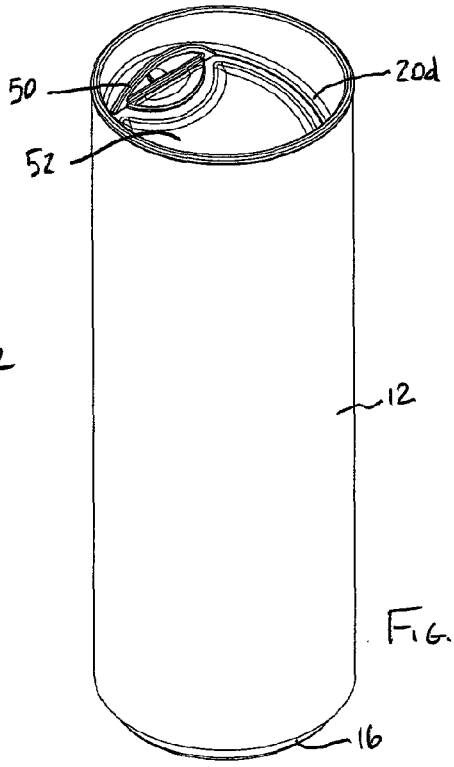

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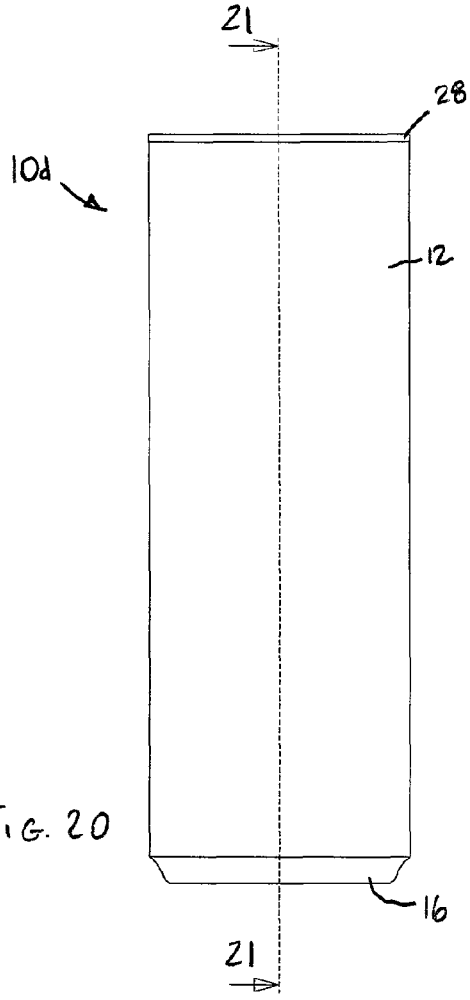

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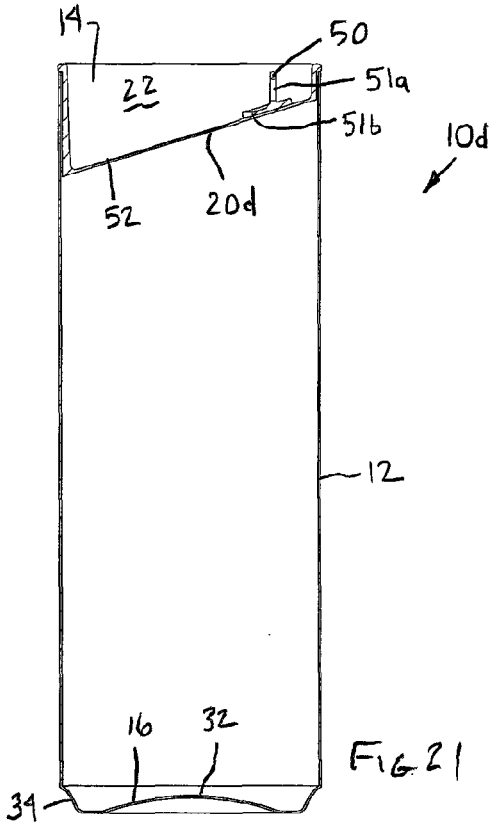

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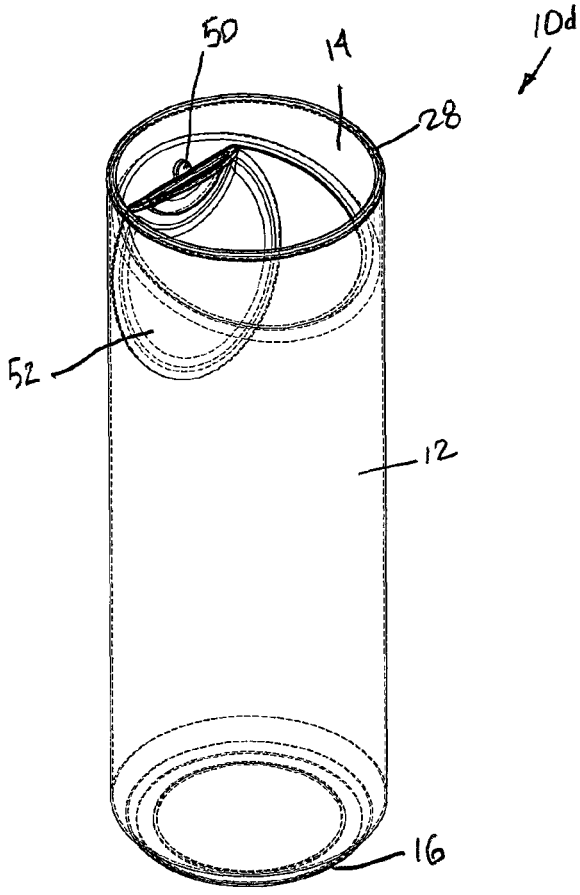

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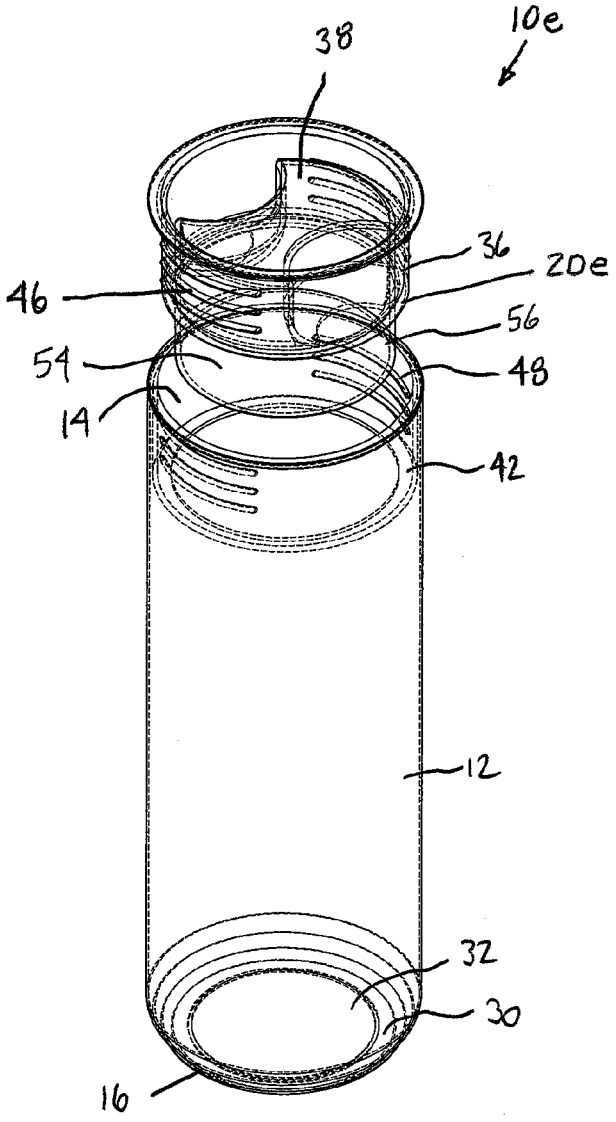

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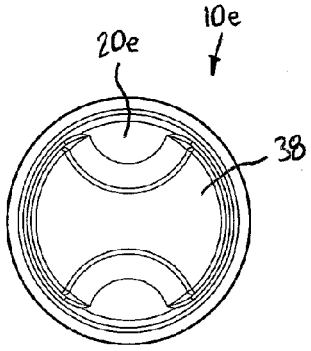

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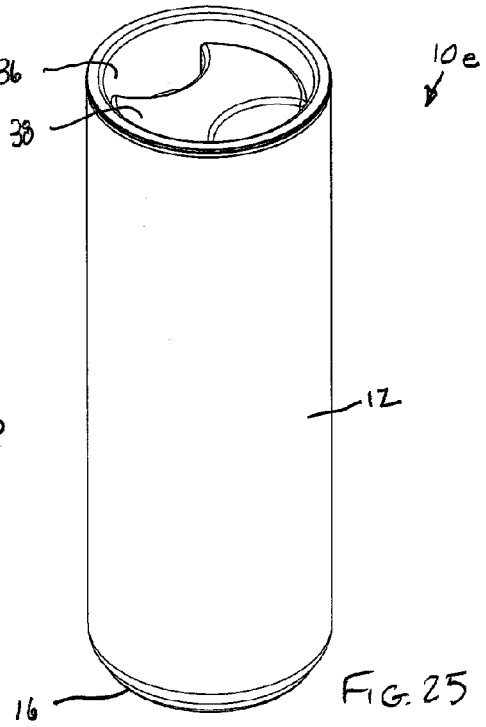

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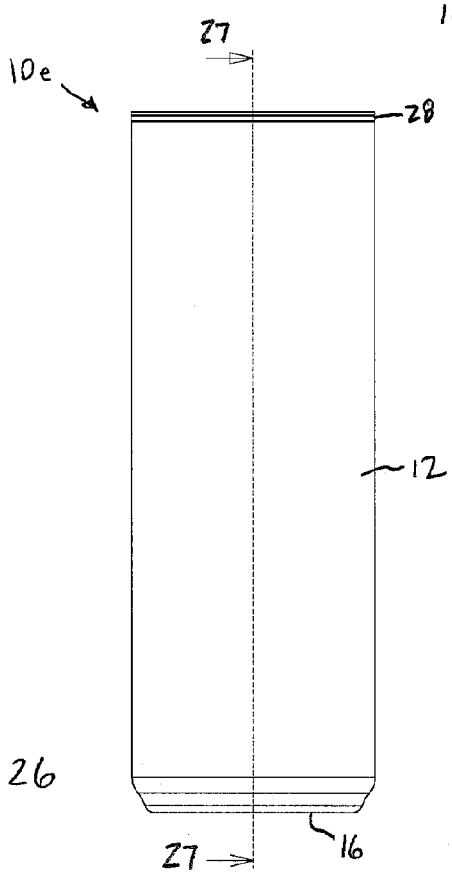

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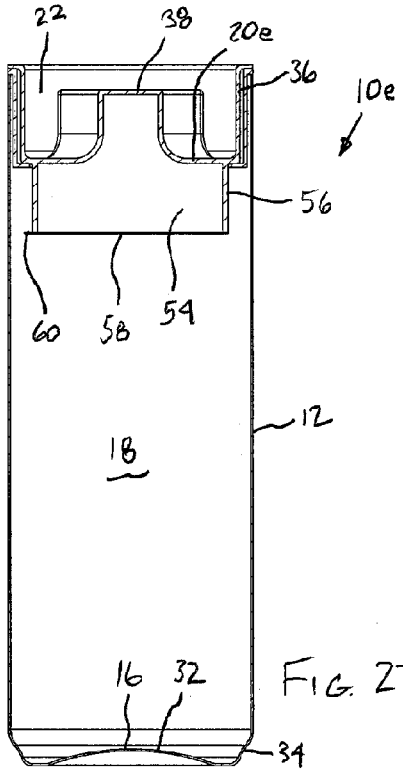

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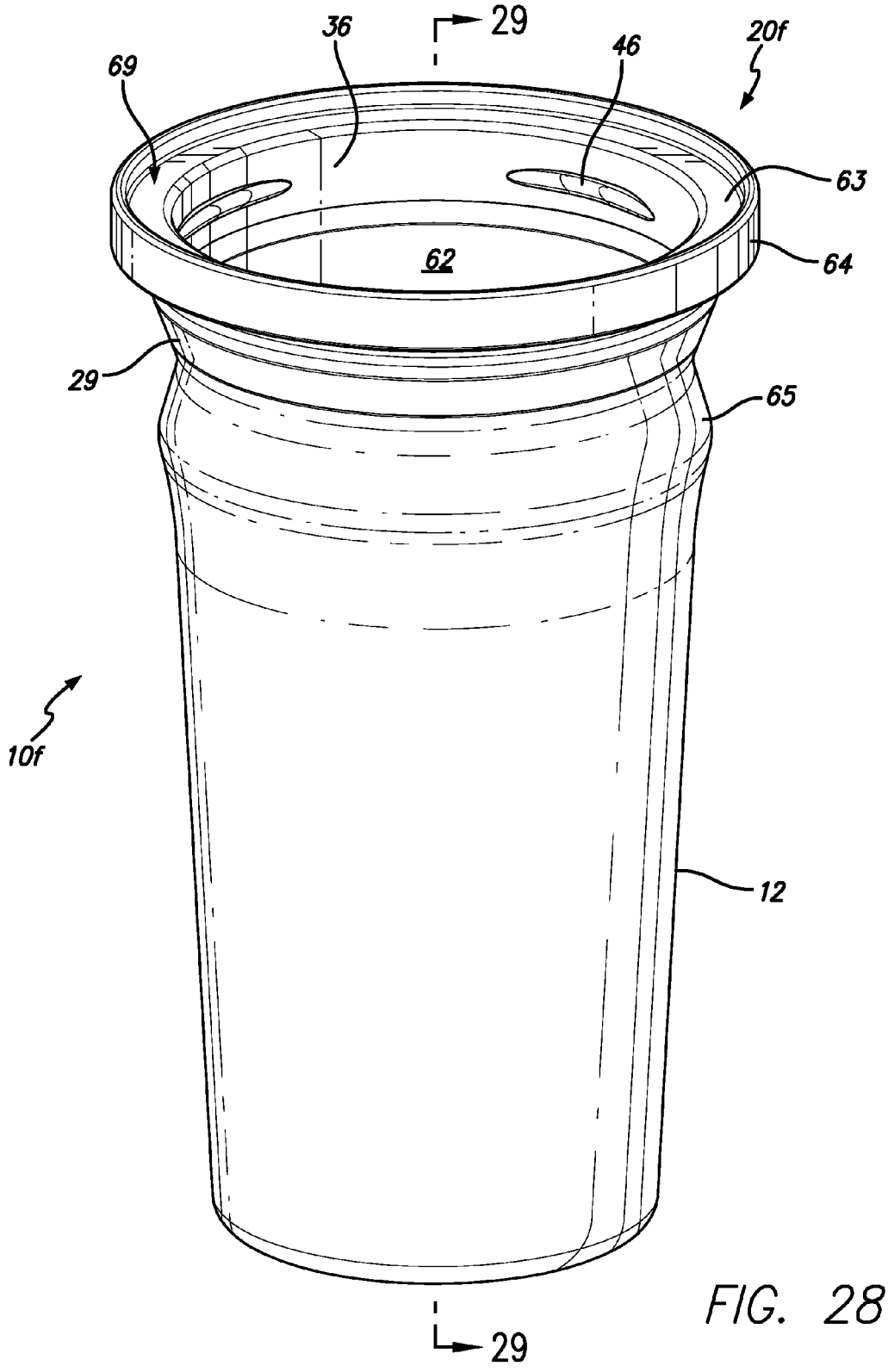

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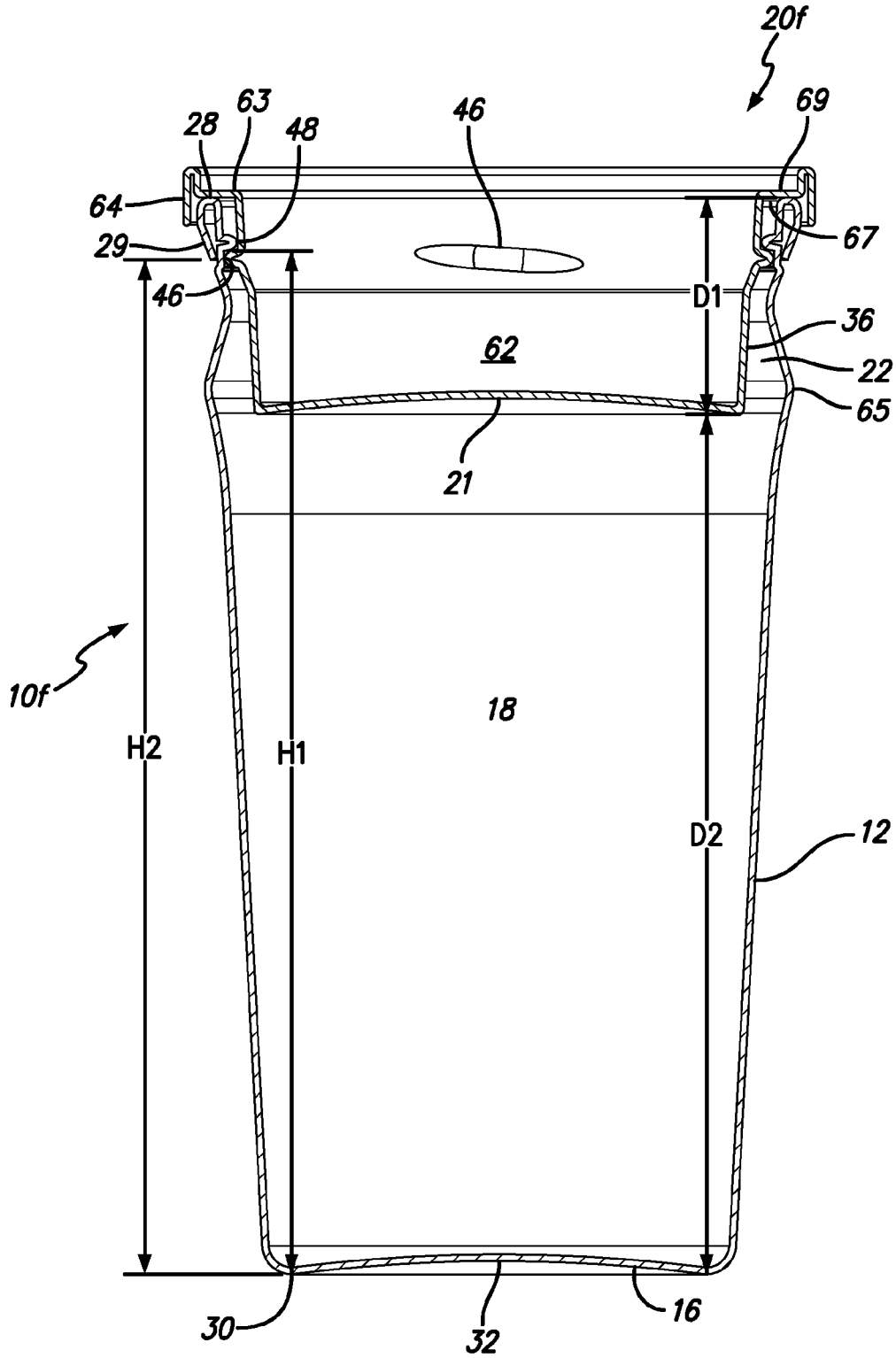
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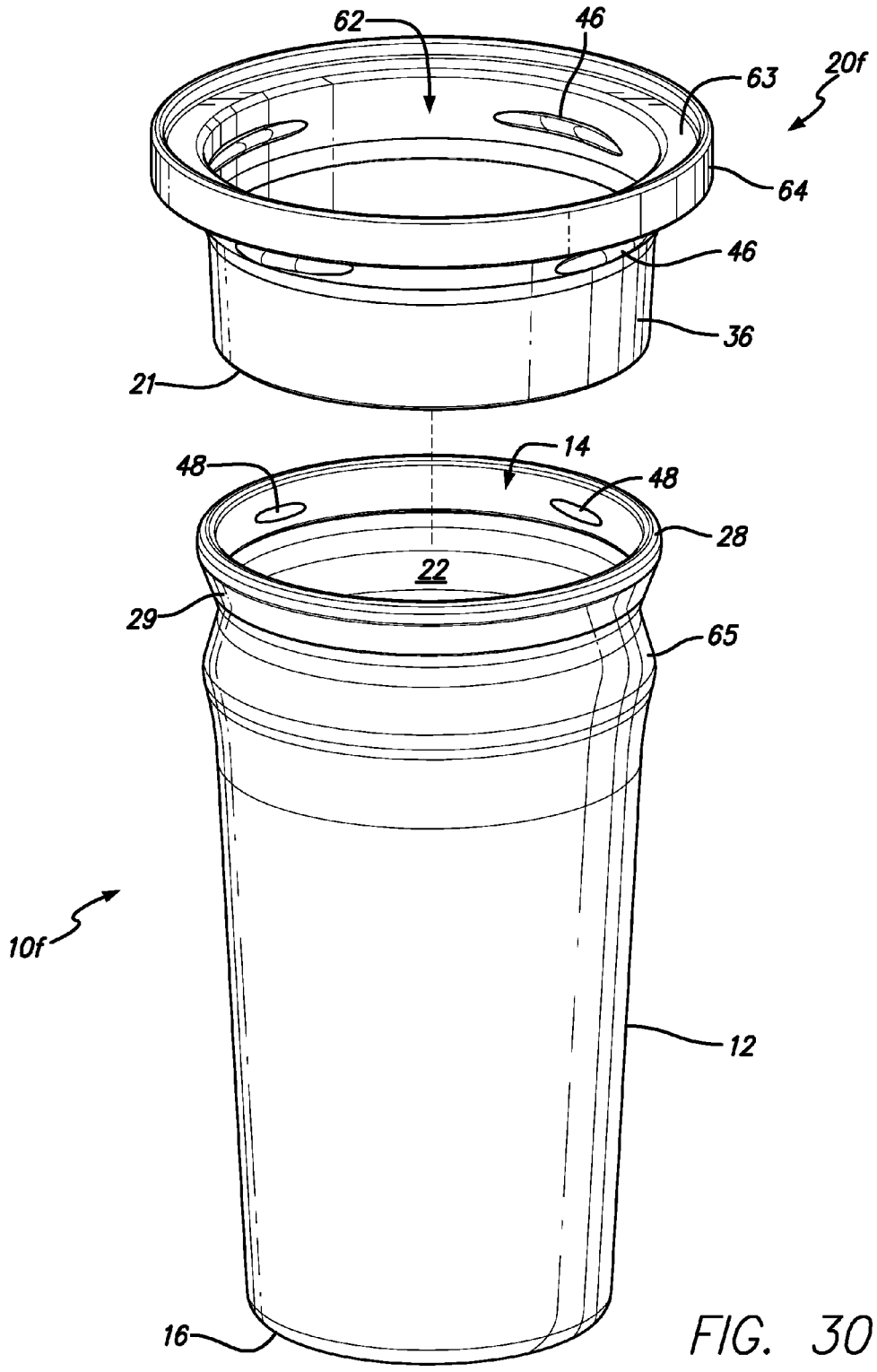
FIG. 29



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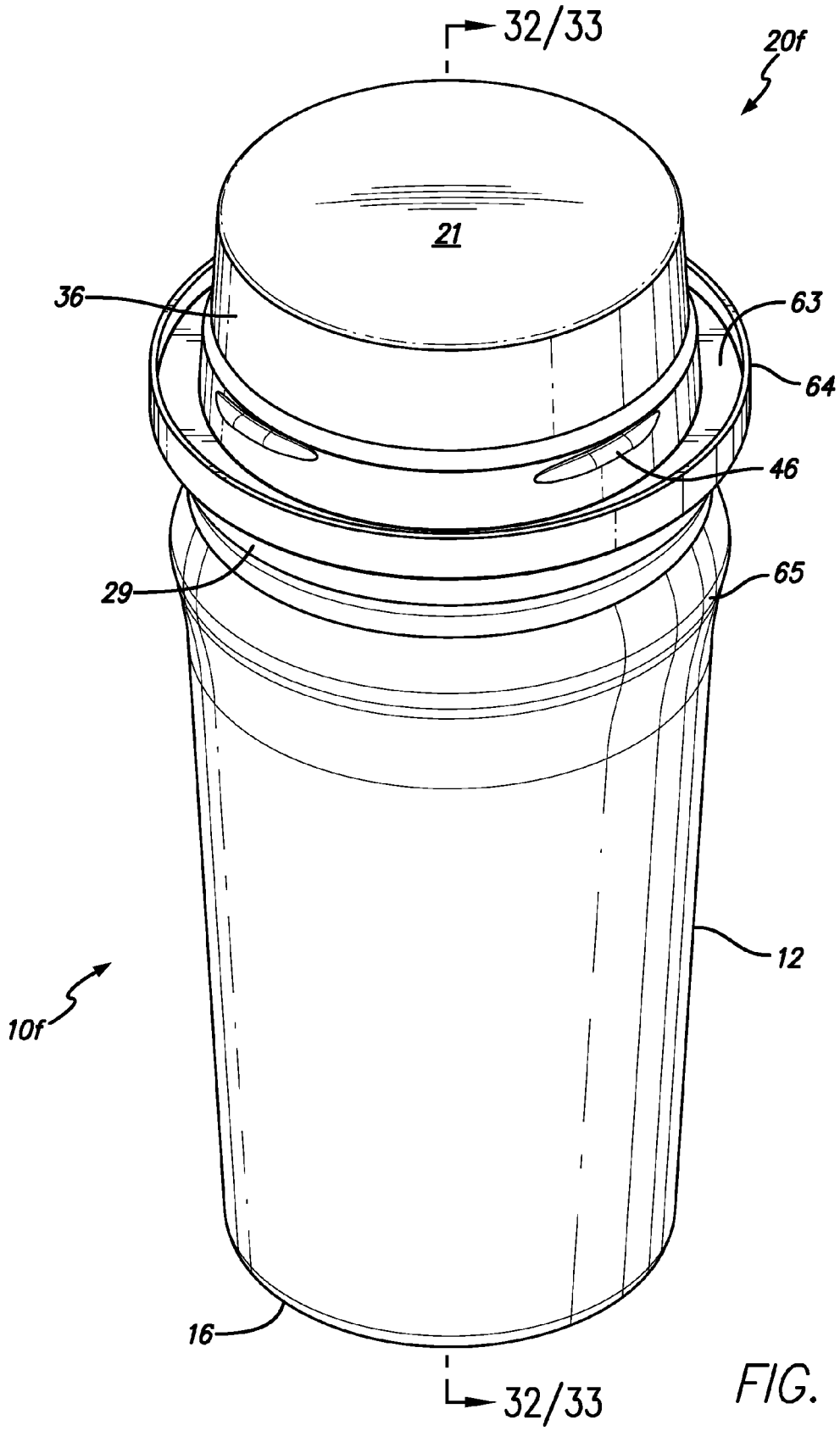

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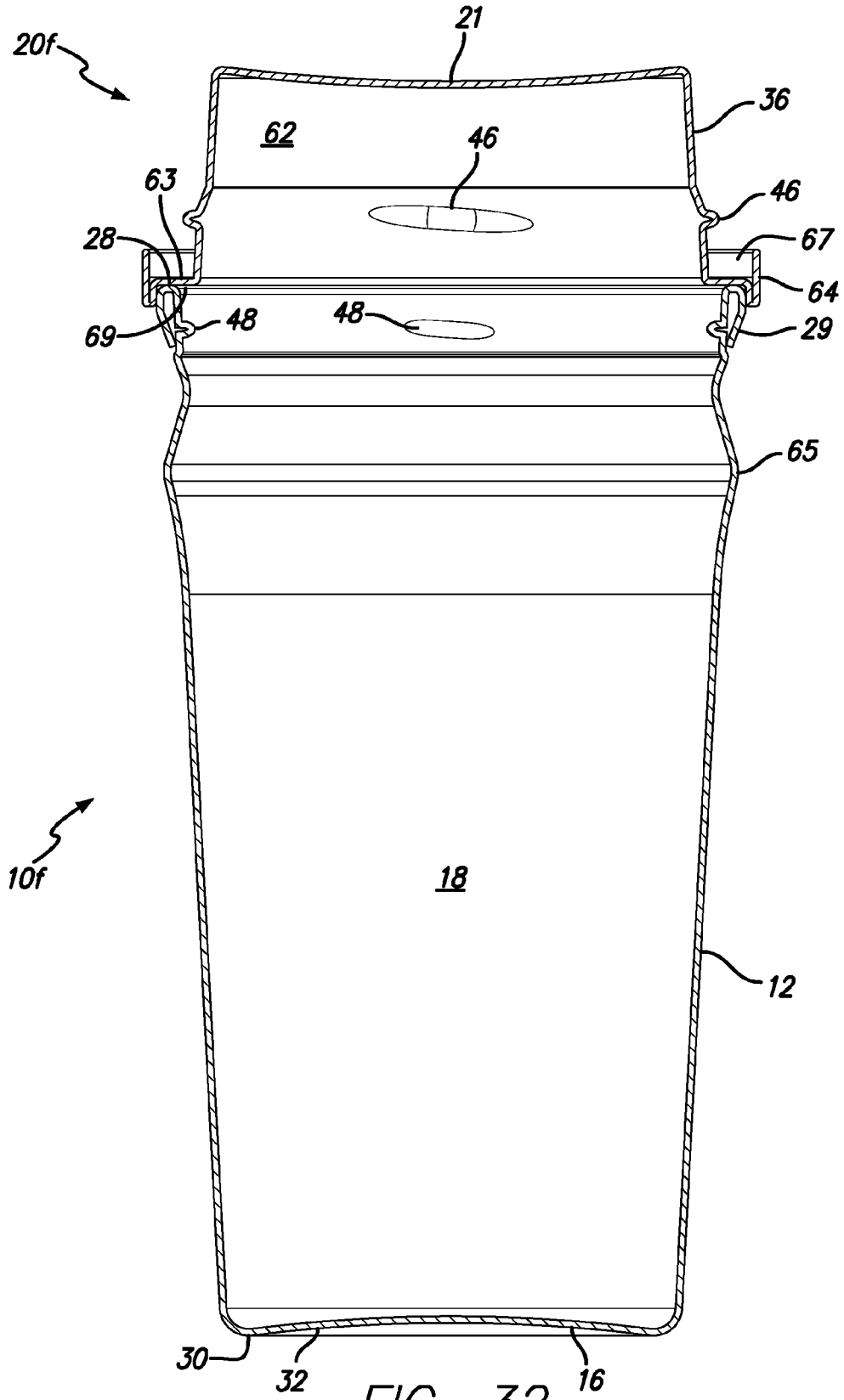
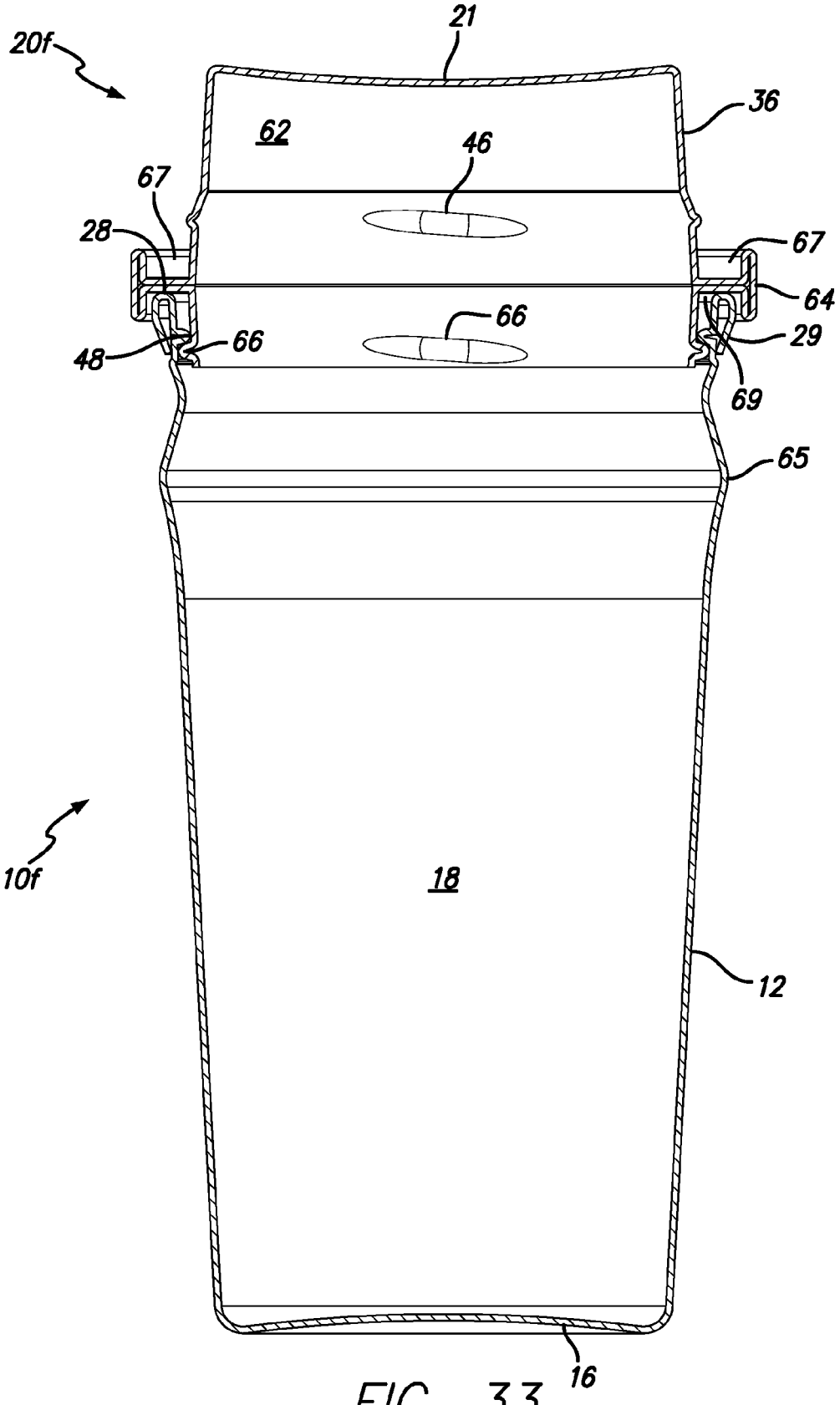


FIG. 32



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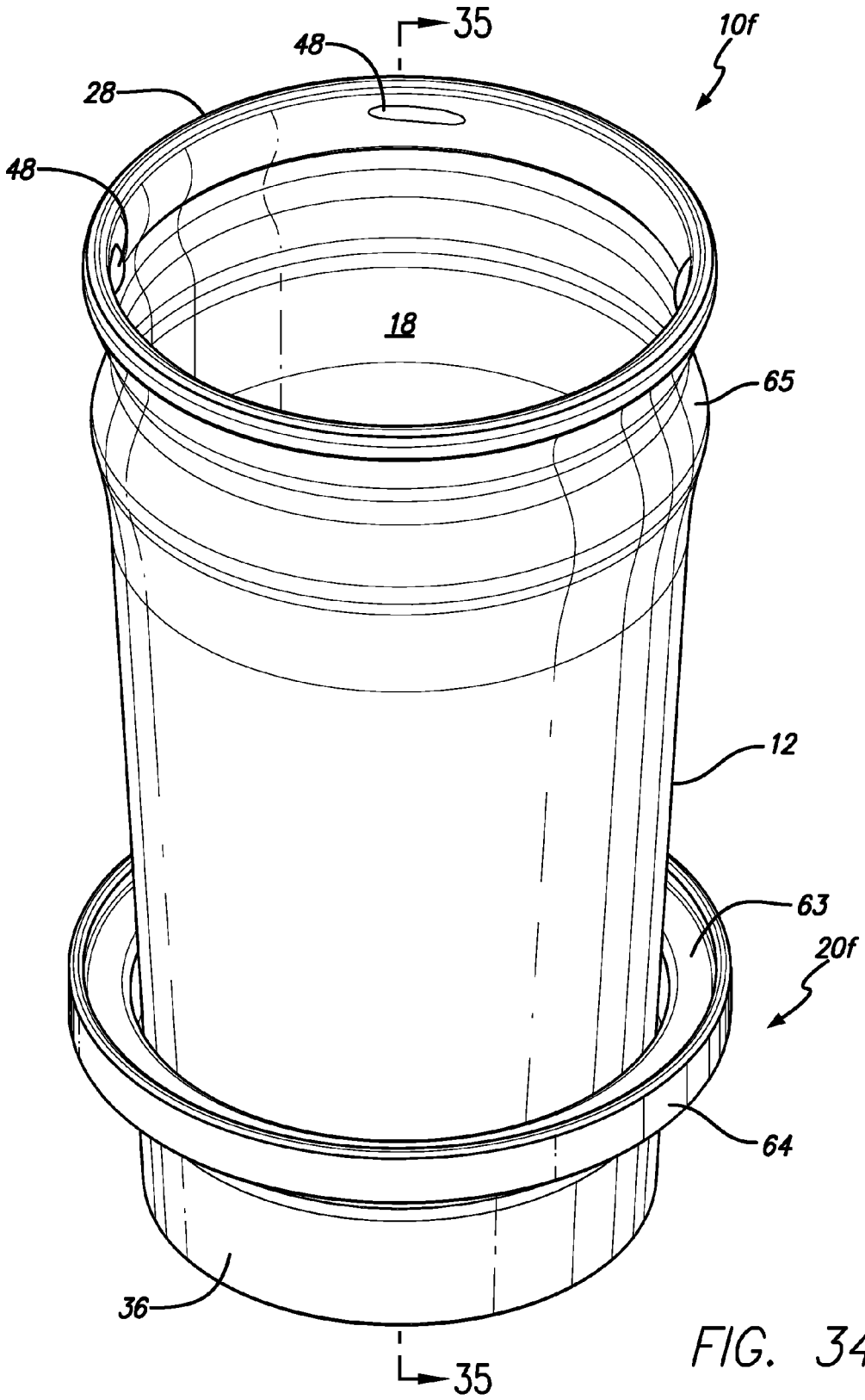

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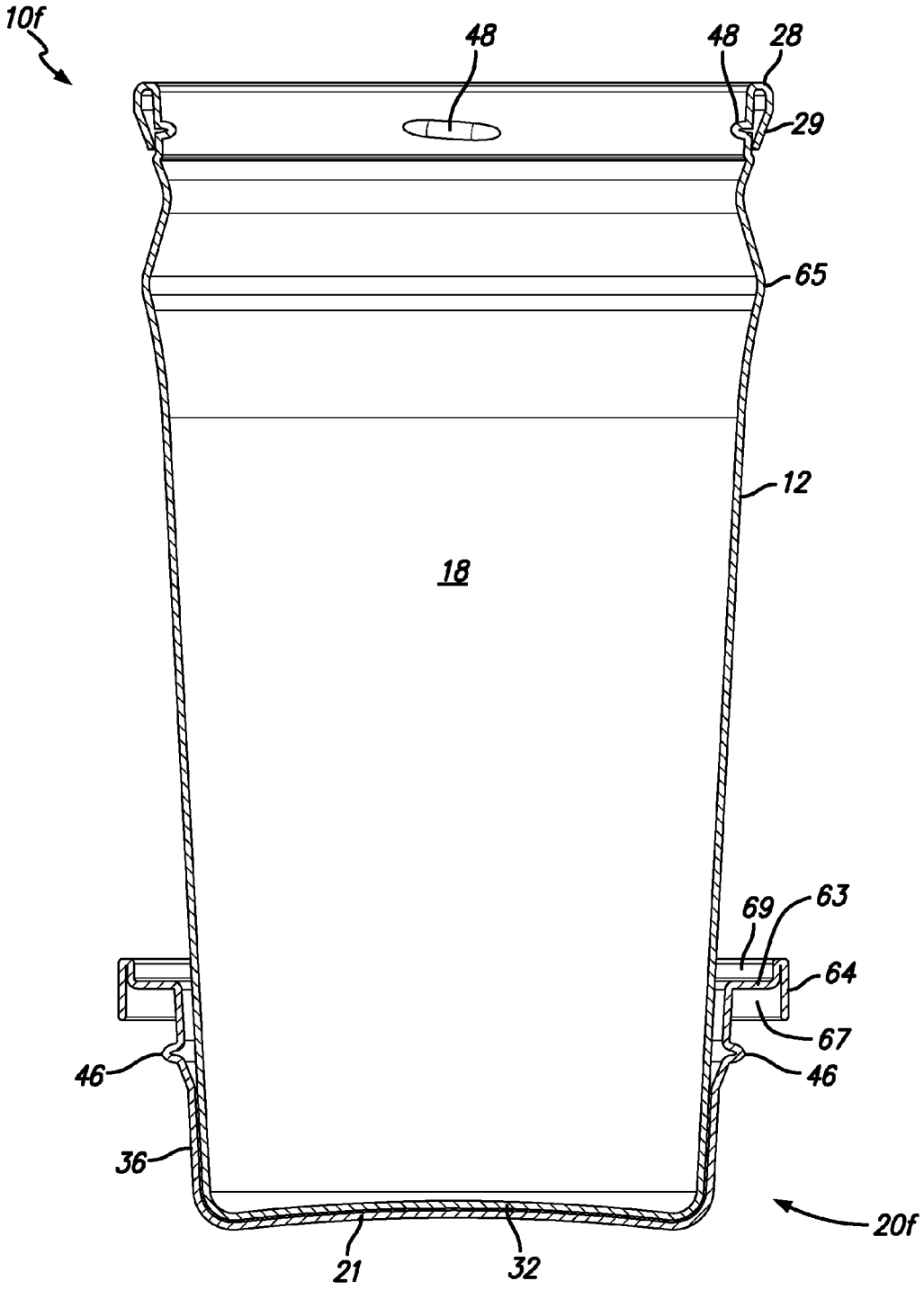

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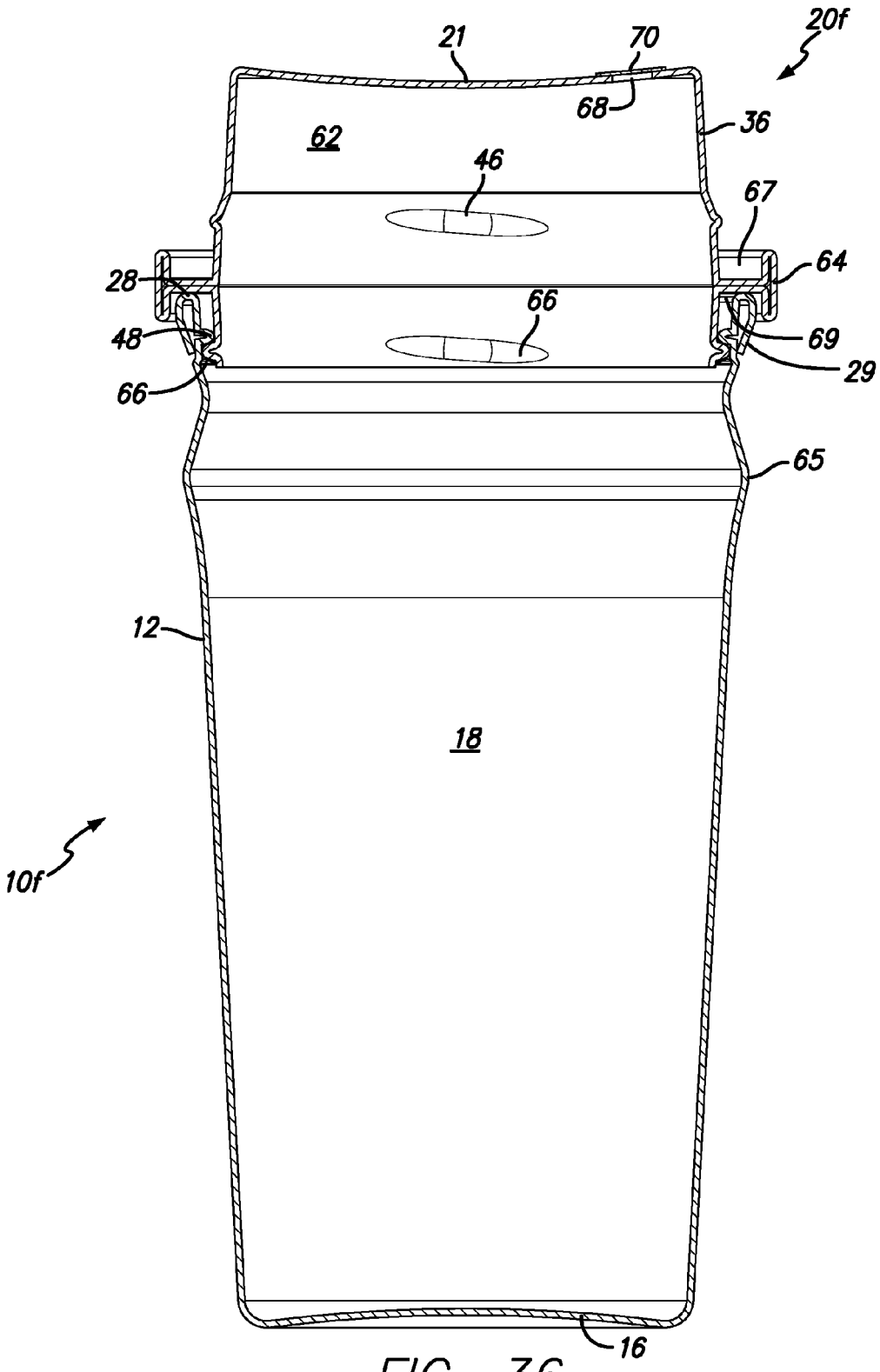

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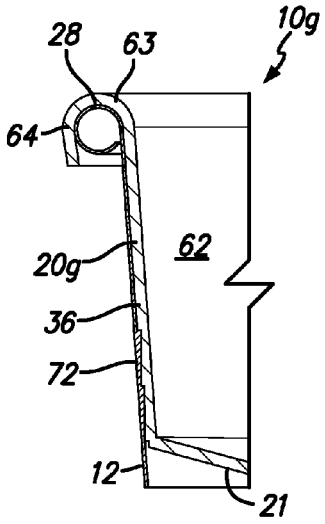

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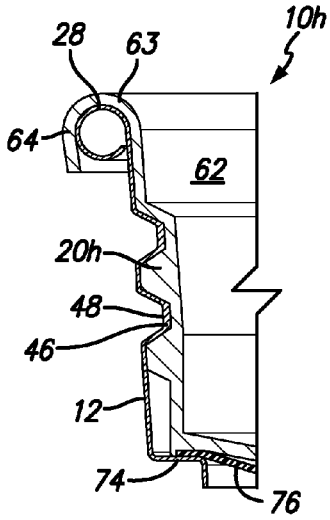

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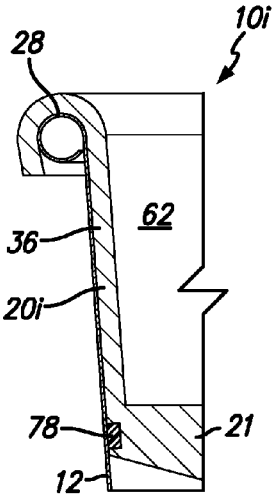
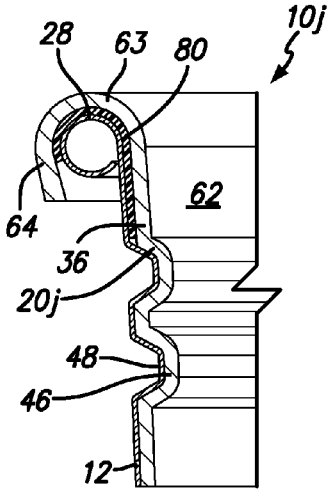


FIG. 37C



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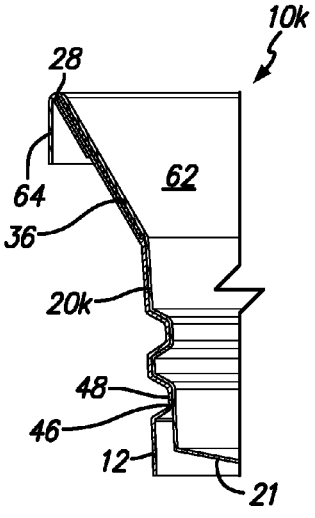

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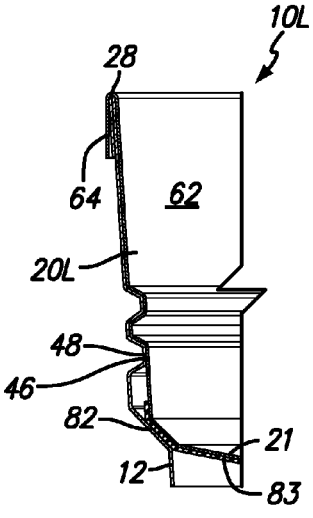

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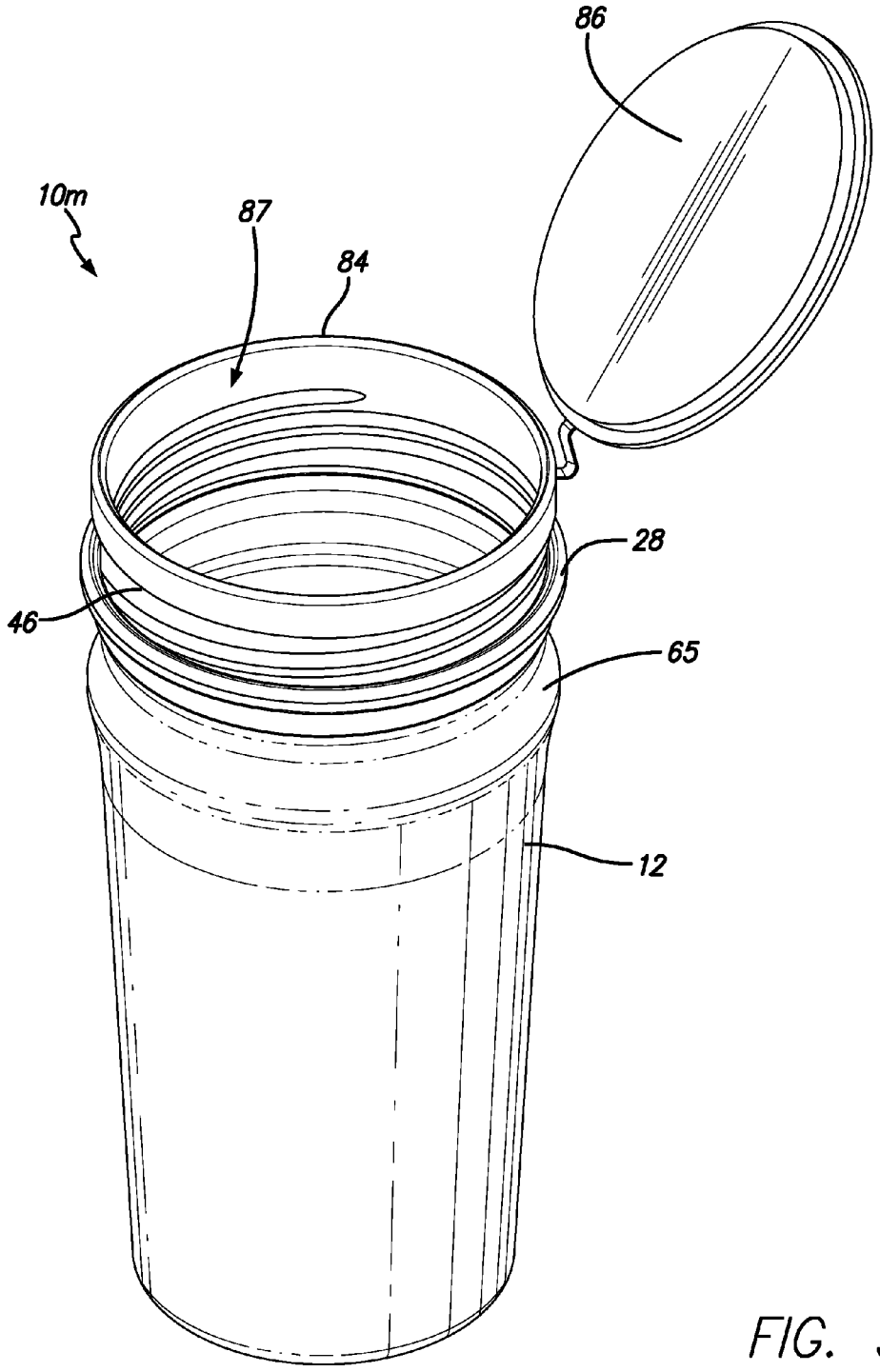

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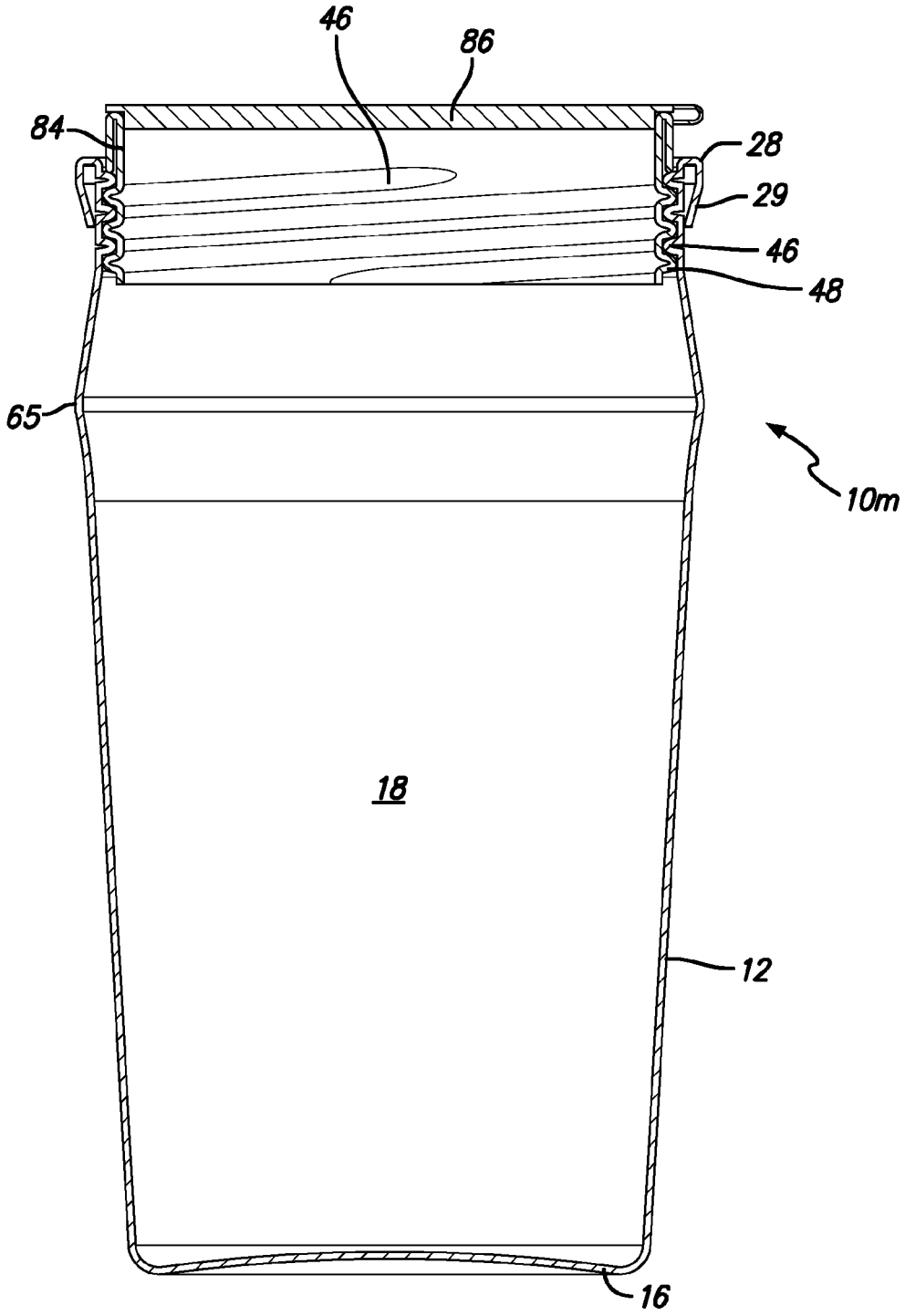
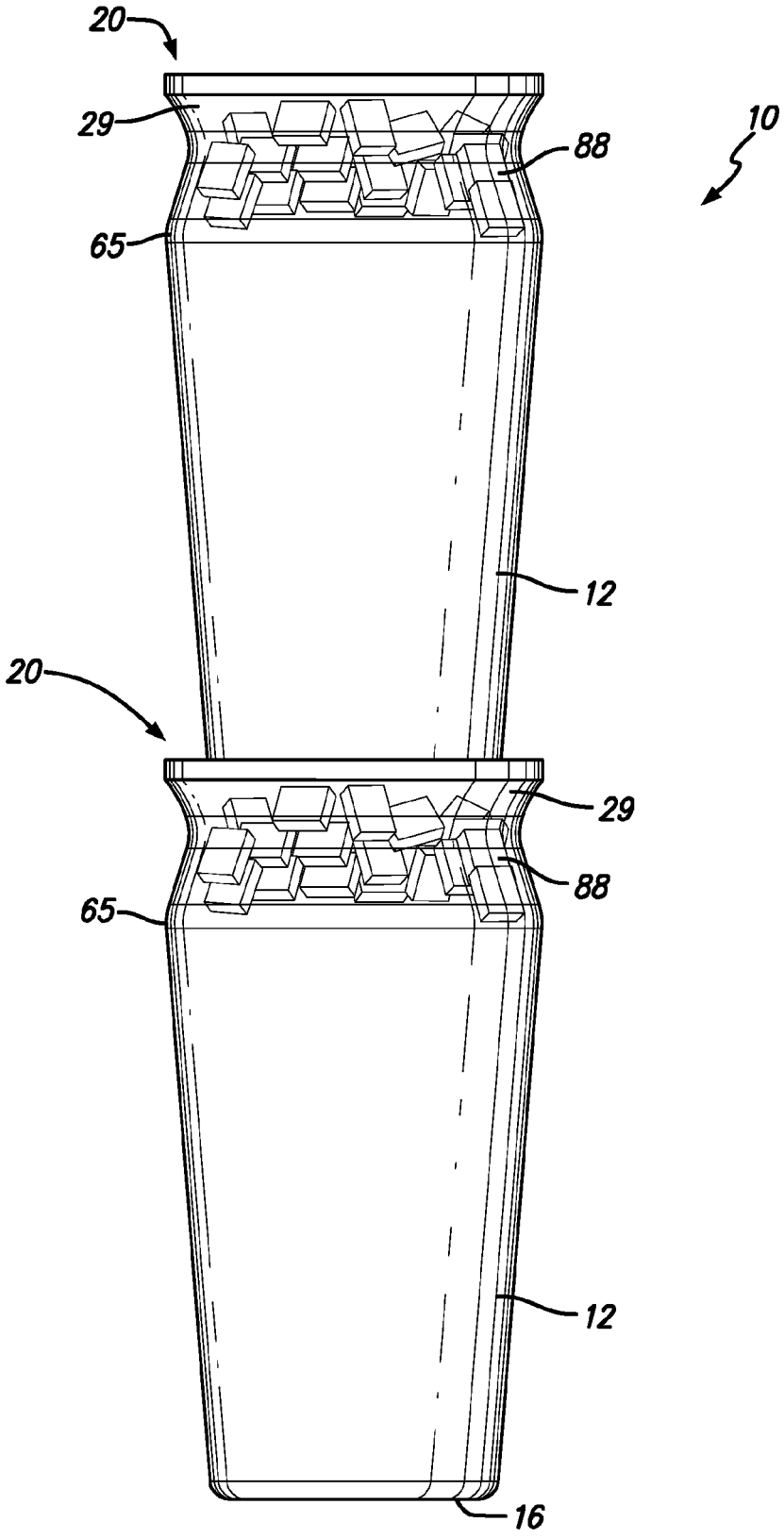


FIG. 39



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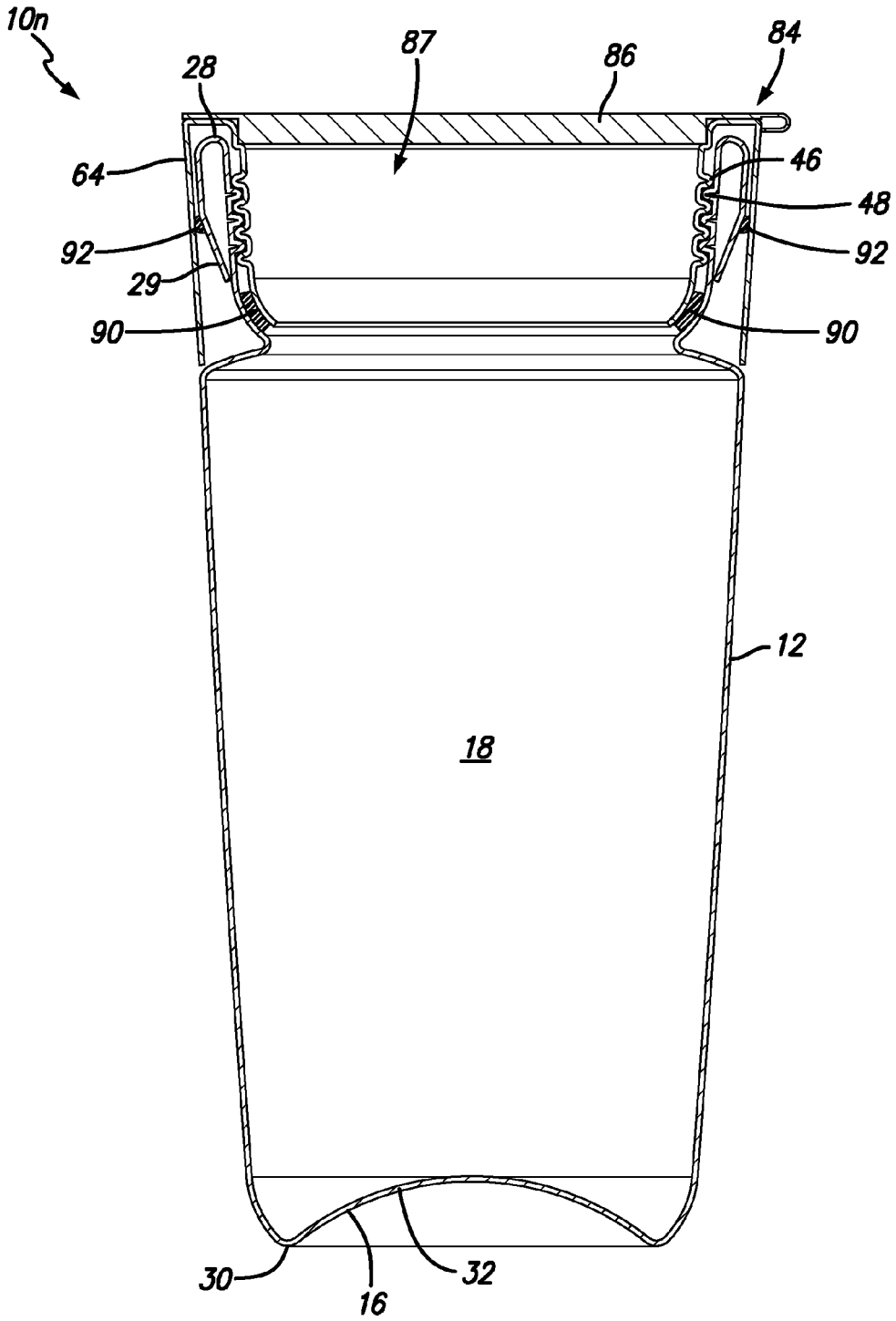

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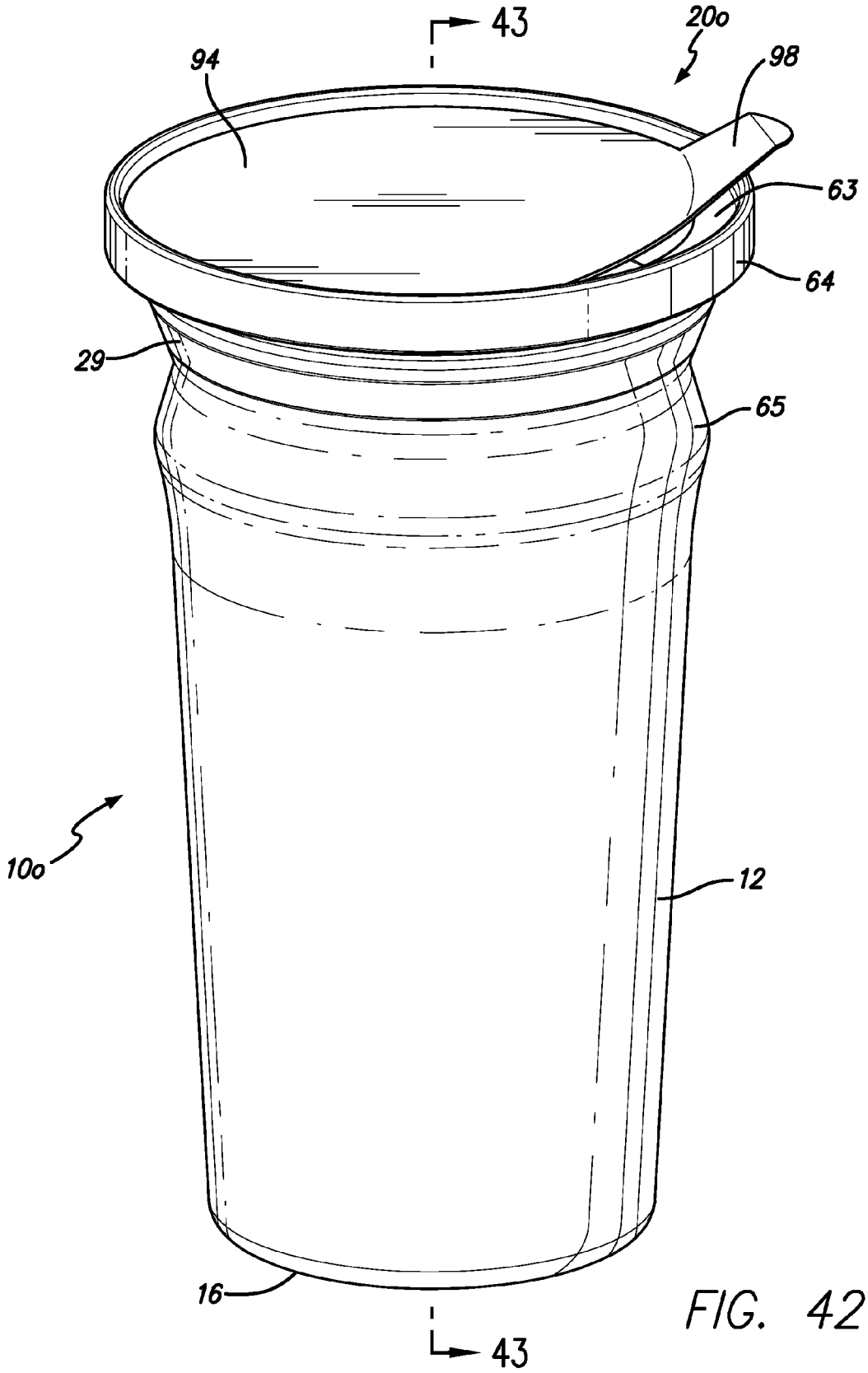

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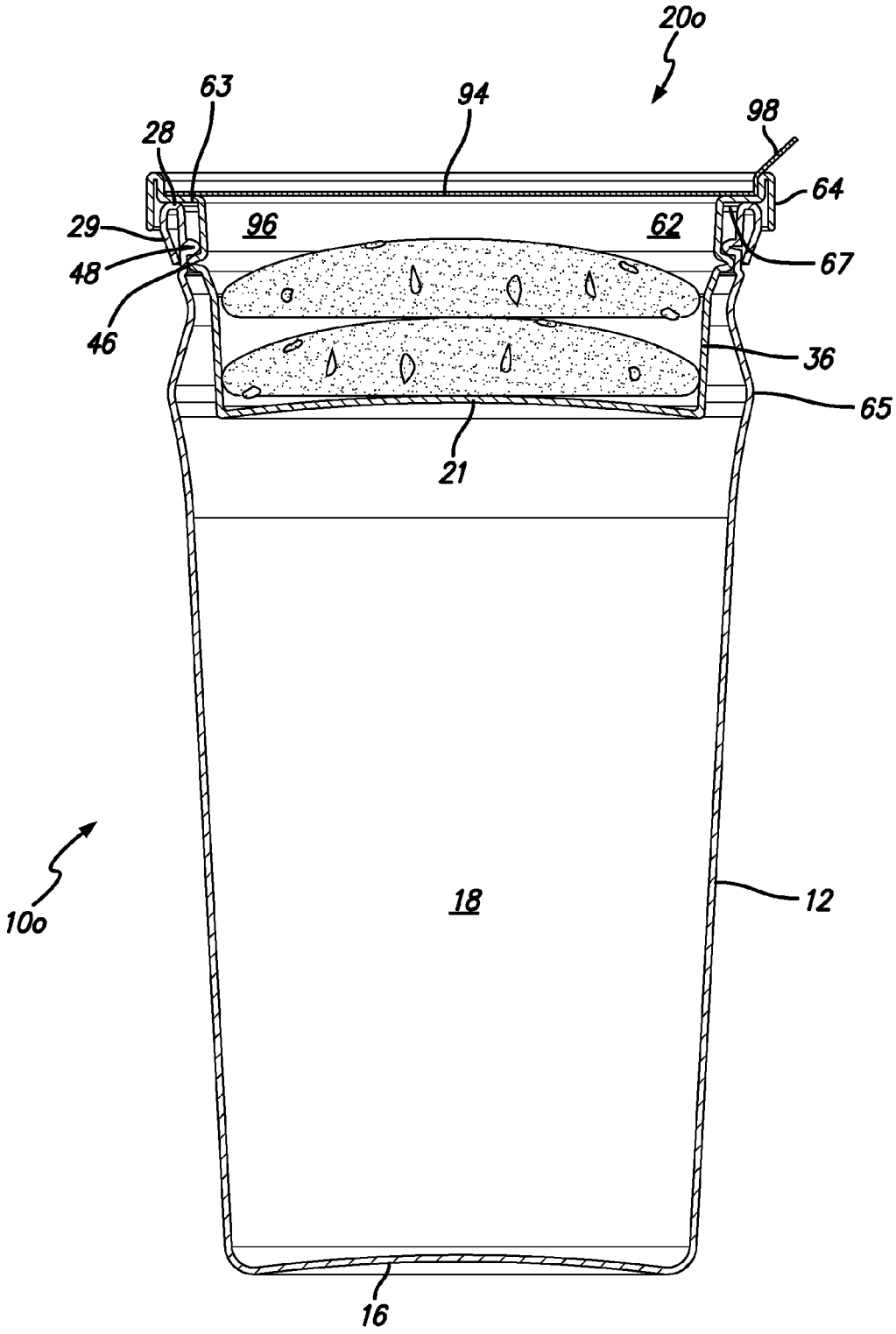

FIG. 43

BEVERAGE CONTAINER WITH REMOVABLE COVER

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 61/968,274, filed Mar. 20, 2014, and U.S. Provisional Application No. 61/916,049, filed Dec. 13, 2013, and is a continuation-in-part of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/669,363, filed Nov. 5, 2012, which are all incorporated by reference herein in their entireties.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a beverage container, and more particularly to a beverage container with a recessed top and the method for using the beverage container.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

To keep a beverage cool after opening a can, a user typically has to pour the contents into a cup or glass with ice therein or put an unfinished can into an ice chest or refrigerator where it risks being spilled. This can be an inconvenience for the user and promotes waste as it requires the use of materials for the can and for the cup or the use of soap and water to wash the non-disposable glassware.

SUMMARY OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

In accordance with a first aspect of the present invention there is provided a beverage container that includes a cylindrical main body portion having an open top and a closed bottom and that defines an interior. The bottom includes a contact surface and a continuous concave non-contact portion extending therebetween. The cylindrical main body portion defines a first volume. The container also includes a removable cover positioned at a location between the bottom and the top, and a recess defined between the removable cover and the open top. The recess defines a second volume that is between about 5% and about 50% of the first volume. In a preferred embodiment, the cylindrical main body portion includes a rim disposed adjacent the top, wherein the rim has a diameter that is greater than or equal to the diameter of the top of the cylindrical main body portion. Preferably, the non-contact portion does not include a convex portion. However, this is not a limitation on the present invention.

In a preferred embodiment, the cylindrical main body portion includes a ledge disposed on an inside surface thereof that has at least one notch defined therein. The removable cover includes at least one tab sized to fit through the notch. In a closed position, at least a portion of the tab extends under the ledge. The removable cover includes a cylindrical wall extending upwardly therefrom and a handle extending between opposing walls of the cylindrical wall. In another embodiment, the removable cover comprises a ring and fully removable lid. In another embodiment, the cylindrical main body portion includes threads on an inside surface thereof and the removable cover includes a cylindrical wall extending upwardly therefrom that has threads on an outside surface thereof that are matingly engaged with the threads on the cylindrical main body portion, and the cylindrical main body portion includes a ledge disposed on an inside surface thereof. The removable cover is in a sealing relationship with a top surface of the ledge. In another embodiment, the removable cover includes a tab and a stay on lid, and the tab includes a pull portion and a lever portion that engages the stay on lid. In a preferred embodiment, the removable cover is positioned at a location such that a standard volume of beverage can fill the first volume below the removable cover, and the second volume or recess is at least 20 mL.

In a preferred embodiment, the removable cover further includes a secondary container that includes a removable lid associated therewith. Preferably, the cylindrical main body portion includes a first beverage and the secondary container includes a second beverage, and the first and second beverages are separated by the removable lid.

In accordance with another aspect of the present invention there is provided a method that includes providing a beverage container that includes a cylindrical main body portion having an open top, a closed bottom and an interior that defines a first volume, a removable cover positioned at a location between the bottom and the open top, and a recess defined between the removable cover and the top of the cylindrical main body portion that defines a second volume. The beverage container includes a first beverage disposed therein that fills a third volume below the removable cover. The method also includes removing the removable cover, placing a second beverage into the interior such that the first and second beverages fill the third volume and at least a portion of the second volume.

In accordance with another aspect of the present invention there is provided a beverage container that includes a main body portion having an open top and a closed bottom, an interior, a circular rim and a first set of threads on an inside surface thereof that are positioned adjacent the rim at a first height. The rim includes a downwardly depending portion that extends below the first set of threads. The container also includes a removable cover with a bottom, a generally cylindrical side wall, an annular flange extending outwardly from the generally cylindrical side wall and an annular collar. The collar, the annular flange and the side wall define a first channel that receives the rim, and the bottom and the generally cylindrical side wall cooperate to define a cover cavity. The side wall includes a second set of threads on an outside surface thereof that are matingly engaged with the first set of threads.

In a preferred embodiment, the collar and the annular flange define a second channel opposed to the first channel, and the removable cover can be inverted from an original position where the rim is received in the first channel to an inverted position such that the rim is received in the second channel. Preferably, the collar is dimensioned such that when the removable cover is in the inverted position the collar provides a friction, pressure or interference fit on top of the main body portion. In another preferred embodiment, the generally cylindrical side wall includes a third set of threads that are matingly engaged with the first set of threads when the removable cover is in the inverted position.

In a preferred embodiment, the removable cover can be moved from an original position where the rim is received in the first channel to a bottom position where the bottom of the main body portion is received in the cover cavity, and wherein the generally cylindrical side wall is dimensioned to provide a friction, press or interference fit with the main body portion in the bottom position. In a preferred embodiment, the container includes a recess defined between the bottom of the removable cover and the open top of the main body portion. Preferably, the recess defines a second volume that is between about 5% and about 50% of the first volume.

In a preferred embodiment, the first set of threads are positioned at a first height, the downwardly depending por-

tion of the rim includes a bottom edge that is positioned at a second height, and the first height is greater than the second height. Preferably, the removable cover is sealed with respect to the main body portion in both the original position and the inverted position. In a preferred embodiment, the removable cover includes a removable lid that covers the cover cavity and defines a cover interior, and an item is positioned in the cover interior.

In accordance with another aspect of the present invention there is provided a method that includes providing a beverage container having a main body portion with an open top, a closed bottom and defining an interior that defines a first volume. A beverage is disposed in the interior. The beverage container also includes a removable cover removably engaged with the main body portion in an original position. The removable cover includes a bottom and a generally cylindrical side wall extending upwardly from the bottom, and the bottom and the generally cylindrical side wall define a cover cavity. The method includes removing the removable cover from the cylindrical main body portion, and placing the removable cover on the cylindrical main body portion in an inverted position where the cover cavity is not positioned in the recess. In a preferred embodiment, the method further includes placing at least one additive in the interior before placing the cover on the main body portion in the inverted position, and shaking the beverage container after placing the cover on the main body portion in the inverted position.

In a preferred embodiment, the method includes the step of removing the removable cover from the main body portion when it is in either the original or inverted position, and placing the removable cover on the bottom of the main body portion such that the bottom of the main body portion is received in the cover cavity. In a preferred embodiment, the beverage container includes a recess defined between the bottom of the removable cover and the top of the main body portion. The recess defines a second volume, and when the removable cover is disposed in the original position the cover cavity is positioned within the recess, and when the removable cover is disposed in the inverted position the cover cavity is not positioned within the recess. Preferably, the second volume is between about 5% and about 50% of the first volume.

In a preferred embodiment, the step of removing the cover from the original position includes disengaging a second set of threads on the removable cover from the first set of threads. The step of placing the removable cover on the main body portion in an inverted position also preferably includes engaging a third set of threads on the removable cover with the first set of threads.

In a preferred embodiment, the method includes exposing a drinking opening in the bottom of the removable cover after removing the removable cover. This step can be done before or after placing the cover in the inverted position. It will be appreciated that the exposing of the drinking opening can be done, for example, by pulling, hinging or otherwise removing a tab off of the cover bottom. In an exemplary use, an empty beverage container can be provided with the cover in the original position. The cover can be removed, a beverage poured in and then the cover can be placed back on the main body portion in the inverted position and the drinking opening can then be exposed. Preferably, the bottom of the main body portion and the bottom of the removable cover have the same or similar amount of concavity so that beverage containers can be stacked on one another.

In accordance with another aspect of the present invention there is provided a method that includes providing a beverage container with a main body portion having an open top, a closed bottom and defines an interior that defines a first volume having a beverage disposed therein. The container also includes a removable cover removably engaged with the main body portion. The removable cover includes a bottom, a generally cylindrical side wall extending upwardly from the bottom and a removable lid. The bottom, the generally cylindrical side wall and the removable lid define a cover interior, and an item is positioned in the cover interior. The method includes removing the removable lid from the removable cover and removing the item from the cover interior, and removing the removable cover from the cylindrical main body portion.

In a preferred embodiment, the removable cover further includes a secondary container that includes the second beverage and has a removable lid, and the method includes removing the removable lid before placing the second beverage into the interior.

In an embodiment, the removable cover further includes a secondary container that includes a removable lid associated therewith. Preferably, the cylindrical main body portion includes a first beverage and the secondary container includes a second beverage, and the first and second beverages are separated by either the removable lid or the bottom of the removable cover.

It will be appreciated by those of ordinary skill in the art that the beverage containers herein provide the following features and advantages. The embodiments with a full aperture opening allow for improved can drinking experience through exposure to aroma, effervescence. The embodiments with a frusto-conical or tapered shape provide for stackability of the cans/containers. The ridges/bulge together with the taper provide a place for a user to hold the can, provide an improved grip and provide a more ergonomic feel. In certain embodiment, the smooth edge and lip contact area improves the can drinking experience through a cup like feel. As discussed below, the smooth edge or rim can be formed rolling the can material either inside or outside to provide a rim that is flat, squared or rounded. In a preferred embodiment, this provides a rim with no seam (between lid and can) or other encumbrances at lip contact area. In a preferred embodiment, there are no threads, tabs or sealing mechanisms at the lip contact area, because they are positioned below and/or inside the can/container.

In a preferred embodiment, the container opens with a twist and the lid/cover is threaded on to the top and inside of can with male (protruding) threads on the inside of the container and female threads on the exterior of the cover. Preferably, the threads (or other sealing mechanism) are not visible from the exterior of the container because the rim extends down far enough to cover, conceal or hide the threads. Preferably, the sealing structure is achieved by rolling exterior to interior or interior to exterior and not through rolling and seaming lid onto can.

As described more fully below, several sealing options are provided that include threads, tabs, barbs, o-rings, ridges, etc. In a preferred embodiment, the cover can be used as a secondary compartment to keep separate additives with a separate lid. In a preferred embodiment, the removable cover does not need to be disposed of or discarded, but can be affixed to bottom of can. Preferably, the lid can be inverted and affixed to top of can increasing the volume of the overall container. In the inverted position, the lid or cover attaches with an additional sealing method such as a tight/press fit or threads. Additional room provided by the inverted cover allows for additives, such as ice, mixers, further beverage, or the like. The inverted cover also allows the container to be used as a shaker.

In a preferred embodiment, to form the container, the cylindrical and/or frusto-conical main body portion is punched out of a piece of material (e.g., aluminum), the threads are formed therein, and then the top is rolled over to "hide" the threads from the outside to form the rim. Then, after the container is filled with a beverage, the cover (which is formed separately) is screwed on. The cover can be made of any desired material, e.g., metal, plastic, etc. As used herein "cylindrical" or "generally cylindrical" means that a component (e.g., the main body portion) has a circular cross-section, but does not necessarily have a constant diameter. For example, frusto-conical, tapered or the inclusion of a bulge is considered "cylindrical" or "generally cylindrical."

In a preferred embodiment, the removable cover fits on the bottom of the main body portion in a press or friction fit arrangement. Some states, territories or countries, etc. include laws or regulations that prevent cans with pull tabs that separate from the can (as they often become litter). With the removable cover capable of fitting on the bottom of the main body portion, a user can have a full aperture opening can and have a place to store the cover without throwing it away.

The invention, together with additional features and advantages thereof, may be best understood by reference to the following description.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. **1** is a side elevational view of a beverage container having a portion cut away to show liquid and ice therein in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. **2** is a top plan view of the beverage container of FIG. **1**;

FIG. **3** is a top perspective view of the beverage container of FIG. **1**;

FIG. **4** is a side elevational view of the beverage container of FIG. **1**;

FIG. **5** is a cross sectional view of the beverage container of FIG. **1** taken along line **5-5** of FIG. **4**;

FIG. **6** is a bottom plan view of the beverage container of FIG. **1**;

FIG. **7** is an exploded perspective view of a beverage container in accordance with another preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. **8** is a perspective view of the cover assembly from the beverage container of FIG. **7**;

FIG. **9** is a top plan view of the beverage container of FIG. **7**;

FIG. **10** is a top perspective view of the beverage container of FIG. **7**;

FIG. **11** is a side elevational view of the beverage container of FIG. **7**;

FIG. **12** is a cross sectional view of the beverage container of FIG. **7** taken along line **12-12** of FIG. **11**;

FIG. **13** is an exploded perspective view of a beverage container in accordance with another preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. **14** is a top plan view of the beverage container of FIG. **13**;

FIG. **15** is a top perspective view of the beverage container of FIG. **13**;

FIG. **16** is a side elevational view of the beverage container of FIG. **13**;

FIG. **17** is a cross sectional view of the beverage container of FIG. **13** taken along line **17-17** of FIG. **16**;

FIG. **18** is a top plan view of a beverage container in accordance with another preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. **19** is a top perspective view of the beverage container of FIG. **18**;

FIG. **20** is a side elevational view of the beverage container of FIG. **18**;

FIG. **21** is a cross sectional view of the beverage container of FIG. **18** taken along line **21-21** of FIG. **20**;

FIG. **22** is a top perspective view of the beverage container of FIG. **18** with the lid in the open position;

FIG. **23** is an exploded perspective view of a beverage container in accordance with another preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. **24** is a top plan view of the beverage container of FIG. **23**;

FIG. **25** is a top perspective view of the beverage container of FIG. **23**;

FIG. **26** is a side elevational view of the beverage container of FIG. **23**;

FIG. **27** is a cross sectional view of the beverage container of FIG. **23** taken along line **27-27** of FIG. **16**;

FIG. **28** is a perspective view of a beverage container with the lid threaded on the top of the can in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. **29** is a cross-section taken along line **29-29** of FIG. **28**;

FIG. **30** is an exploded perspective of the beverage container and cover of FIG. **28**;

FIG. **31** is a perspective view of the beverage container of FIG. **28** with the cover inverted;

FIG. **32** is a cross-section taken along line **32/33-32/33** of FIG. **31** and showing a pressure fit of the inverted cover on the beverage container;

FIG. **33** is a cross-section of another embodiment taken along line **32/33-32/33** of FIG. **31** and showing a threaded fit of the inverted cover on the beverage container;

FIG. **34** is a perspective view of the beverage container of FIG. **28** with the cover on the bottom thereof;

FIG. **35** is a cross-section taken along line **35-35** of FIG. **34**;

FIG. **36** is a cross-section similar to FIG. **33**, but with an opening for drinking in the cover;

FIG. **37**A is a cross-sectional cut away showing a beverage container with a cover having a barb seal in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. **37**B is a cross-sectional cut away showing a beverage container with a threaded cover and a disc seal in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. **37**C is a cross-sectional cut away showing a beverage container with a cover having an o-ring seal in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. **37**D is a cross-sectional cut away showing a beverage container with a threaded cover and a lip seal in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. **37**E is a cross-sectional cut away showing a beverage container having a flared top and a threaded cover in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. **37**F is a cross-sectional cut away showing a threaded cover with a lower seal in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. **38** is a perspective view of an expanding beverage container in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. **39** is a cross-sectional view of the expanding beverage container of FIG. **38**;

FIG. **40** is a side elevational view of two stacked beverage containers that include ice indicia thereon;

FIG. **41** is a cross-sectional view of a beverage container that includes a cover that can move upwardly to provide room for ice;

FIG. **42** is a perspective view of a beverage container that includes a cover with space therein for storing food; and

FIG. **43** is a cross-section taken along line **43-43** of FIG. **42**.

Like numerals refer to like parts throughout the several views of the drawings.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

The following description and drawings are illustrative and are not to be construed as limiting. Numerous specific details are described to provide a thorough understanding of the disclosure. However, in certain instances, well-known or conventional details are not described in order to avoid obscuring the description. References to one or another embodiment in the present disclosure can be, but not necessarily are, references to the same embodiment; and, such references mean at least one of the embodiments.

Reference in this specification to "one embodiment" or "an embodiment" means that a particular feature, structure, or characteristic described in connection with the embodiment is included in at least one embodiment of the disclosure. Appearances of the phrase "in one embodiment" in various places in the specification do not necessarily refer to the same embodiment, nor are separate or alternative embodiments mutually exclusive of other embodiments. Moreover, various features are described which may be exhibited by some embodiments and not by others. Similarly, various requirements are described which may be requirements for some embodiments but not other embodiments.

The terms used in this specification generally have their ordinary meanings in the art, within the context of the disclosure, and in the specific context where each term is used. Certain terms that are used to describe the disclosure are discussed below, or elsewhere in the specification, to provide additional guidance to the practitioner regarding the description of the disclosure. For convenience, certain terms may be highlighted, for example using italics and/or quotation marks: The use of highlighting has no influence on the scope and meaning of a term; the scope and meaning of a term is the same, in the same context, whether or not it is highlighted. It will be appreciated that the same thing can be said in more than one way.

Consequently, alternative language and synonyms may be used for any one or more of the terms discussed herein. Nor is any special significance to be placed upon whether or not a term is elaborated or discussed herein. Synonyms for certain terms are provided. A recital of one or more synonyms does not exclude the use of other synonyms. The use of examples anywhere in this specification including examples of any terms discussed herein is illustrative only, and is not intended to further limit the scope and meaning of the disclosure or of any exemplified term. Likewise, the disclosure is not limited to various embodiments given in this specification.

Without intent to further limit the scope of the disclosure, examples of instruments, apparatus, methods and their related results according to the embodiments of the present disclosure are given below. Unless otherwise defined, all technical and scientific terms used herein have the same meaning as commonly understood by one of ordinary skill in the art to which this disclosure pertains. In the case of conflict, the present document, including definitions, will control.

It will be appreciated that terms such as "front," "back," "top," "bottom," "side," "short," "long," "up," "down," and "below" used herein are merely for ease of description and refer to the orientation of the components as shown in the figures. It should be understood that any orientation of the components described herein is within the scope of the present invention.

Referring now to the drawings, wherein the showings are for purposes of illustrating the present invention and not for purposes of limiting the same, FIGS. **1-22** show several embodiments of beverage containers (generally referred to herein as **10** and individually referred to or designated as **10***a*, **10***b*, **10***c*, **10***d*, **10***e*, etc. in the FIGUREs) that each include a cylindrical main body portion **12** having an open top **14**, a closed bottom **16**, an interior **18**, and a recessed removable cover **20** positioned at a location between the bottom **16** and the top **14**. A recess **22** is defined between the removable cover **20** and the top of the cylindrical main body portion **12**. Generally, in use, a standard volume of beverage fills the volume below the removable cover **20**. A user can then remove the removable cover **20** and place other items or additives, such as alcohol, ice or other mixer into the container **10** without overflowing the container **10**. For example, a standard volume for a can or beverage container is twelve fluid ounces. In an exemplary embodiment, the beverage container has a volume that can hold sixteen fluid ounces, but only includes twelve fluid ounces of cola therein. In use, a user removes the removable cover **20** and then pours three fluid ounces of whiskey therein to provide a whiskey and cola in the original cola container. In a preferred embodiment, the recess or extra space is between about 5% and about 50% of the total volume. In a more preferred embodiment, the recess or extra space is between about 10% and about 40% of the total volume. In the most preferred embodiment, the recess or extra space is between about 20% and about 30% of the total volume.

FIGS. **2-6** show a first embodiment of a beverage container **10***a*. As shown in FIGS. **2-6**, container **10***a* includes a pull tab removable cover **20***a* or full-top pull-tab that includes a ring **24** connected to a fully removable lid **26**, similar to the removable cover on a tennis ball can. Also see U.S. Pat. No. 3,349,949, the entirety of which is incorporated by reference herein.

As shown in FIG. **5**, in a preferred embodiment, the container **10***a* includes a rim **28** that has an outer circumference that is the same or larger than the outer circumference of the cylindrical main body portion **12**. It will be appreciated by those skilled in the art that the beverage container **10** with a rim **28** with an outer circumference about the same as the circumference of the cylindrical main body portion **12** (thereby providing relatively straight sides), and the recess **22** provides a more cup-like or glass-like feel when drinking from the beverage container **10**. It will be appreciated that, as used herein, "removable cover" means that at least a portion of the removable cover can be removed or otherwise displaced so that the contents of the container **10** can be accessed. The container **10***a* can be manufactured such that the rim **28** and removable cover **20***a* are a unitary piece that at least partially define the recess **22**. However, this is not a limitation on the present invention and the rim **28** and removable cover **20***a* can be separate components.

As shown in FIGS. **5-6**, in a preferred embodiment, the bottom **16** includes a circular contact surface **30** that surrounds a non-contact portion **32** extending therebetween. In a preferred embodiment, the non-contact portion **32** has a continuous concave shape, as shown in FIG. **5**. In another embodiment, the bottom **16** can include a rim and a flat bottom surface, similar to a can of beans or the like. The

bottom **16** can also include a bevel **34**, however, this is not a limitation on the present invention.

FIGS. **7-12** show a second embodiment of a beverage container **10***b*. As shown in FIGS. **7-8**, the removable cover **20***b* includes a cylindrical side wall **36**, a handle **38** and a plurality of tabs **40** that mate with a ledge **42** and corresponding notches **44** defined in the ledge **42**. The ledge **42** is disposed on the interior surface of the cylindrical main body portion **12**. Tabs **40** are received through notches **44** and then the removable cover **20***b* is rotated such that the tabs **40** are positioned under ledge **42**, thereby securing the removable cover **20***b* on cylindrical main body portion **12**, as shown in FIG. **12**. In a preferred embodiment, a seal is positioned between removable cover **20***b* and ledge **42**. It will be appreciated that this embodiment can be resealable.

FIGS. **13-17** show a third embodiment of a beverage container **10***c*. As shown in FIG. **13**, removable cover **20***c* includes threads **46** that mate with corresponding threads **48** on the interior surface of the cylindrical main body portion **12**. In a preferred embodiment, beverage container **10***c* includes ledge **42** to provide a sealing surface with removable cover **20***c*. However, this is not a limitation and ledge **42** can be omitted. It will be appreciated that this embodiment can be resealable.

FIGS. **18-22** show a fourth embodiment of a beverage container **10***d*. As shown in FIG. **19**, removable cover **20***d* of beverage container **10***d* includes a stay-on-tab that comprises a tab **50** that acts as a lever to depress a lid **52**, which folds downwardly and into the container **10**. The tab **50** includes a pull portion **51***a* and a lever portion **51***b*. As shown in FIG. **21**, in a preferred embodiment, the removable cover **20***d* is slanted. However, this is not a limitation on the present invention and the removable cover **20***d* can be horizontally oriented.

FIGS. **23-27** show a fifth embodiment of a beverage container **10***e*. Beverage container **10***e* is similar to beverage container **10***c*, but includes a secondary container **54** associated therewith. The secondary container **54** is preferably used for holding another beverage. For example, if the cylindrical main body portion **12** includes soda therein, the secondary container **54**, which is initially separated from the remainder of the interior **18** can hold an alcoholic beverage. Or, in the alternative, the main body portion **12** can include an alcoholic beverage and the secondary container **54** can include a mixer. In a preferred embodiment, the secondary container **54** includes a wall **56** that extends downwardly from the removable cover **20***e* and a removable lid **58**. In a preferred embodiment, the lid **58** includes a tab **60** that can be grasped to pull the lid **58** off, similar to a yogurt container. It will be appreciated that other methods for removing the lid **58** are within the scope of the present invention. For example, the lid can be screwed on the secondary container **54**.

In use, a user removes the removable cover **20***e* (via threads **46** and **48**), removes lid **58** and pours the beverage in the secondary container **54** into the cylindrical main body portion **12** to form a mixed drink. In a preferred embodiment, beverage container **10***e* includes ledge **42** to provide a sealing surface with removable cover **20***e*. However, this is not a limitation and ledge **42** can be omitted. It will be appreciated that this embodiment can be resealable. Furthermore, the secondary container **54** can be incorporated into any of the other removable covers described herein or any other type of removable cover known in the art.

It will be appreciated by those skilled in the art that the beverage containers **10** disclosed herein can replace standard size beverage containers or cans such that the containers **10** contain a standard volume of fluid ounces or milliliters of a beverage, but the extra volume created by recess **22** provides for the ability to add or introduce ice or other liquid into the container **10**. For example, as shown in FIG. **5**, the removable cover **20** is positioned at a location such that 12 fl. Oz. fit into the container **10***a* below the cover **20** (see arrow D**1**) and 4 fl. Oz. can fit above the cover **20** (see arrow D**2**). After the removable cover **20** is removed, ice or other liquid can be added as desired in any amount up to 4 fl. Oz. without worry of overflow.

Throughout the world different size or volume cans or containers are used for serving beverages. For example, in North America, the standard can size is 12 fl. Oz. or 355 ml. 16, 24 and 40 fl. Oz. are also standard. In Canada, the standard size is 355 ml, which is approximately equivalent to twelve fluid ounces. In Australia the standard can size is 375 ml. In China, India South Africa and Europe, the most common standard size is 330 ml. In some European countries 500 ml and 440 ml size cans are used. In Japan the most common standard sizes are 350 ml and 500 ml. In Korea, 250 ml cans are the most common for soft drinks. However, when accompanying take out food, a short 245 ml can is standard. Furthermore, throughout the world, the standard size of a "shot" of alcohol is different. Typically a shot can be anywhere between 1 fl. Oz. and 3 fl. Oz or 20 and 100 mL. Lastly, standard ice tray receptacles hold between about 1 and 2 fl. Oz. However, ice cubes can be smaller or larger. In a preferred embodiment, the beverage container **10** can hold the standard volume of beverage and has space thereabove for at least one shot of alcohol, two ice cubes or both.

Exemplary uses will now be explained. At sports arenas, beer is often sold from a kiosk or stand where the server opens a can of beer, pours it into a cup and hands the cup to the patron. The can is usually not given to the patron to drink from because of the possibility of dirt or dust on the top of the can or to reduce liability from throwing the can. Therefore, this process requires materials for both the can and the cup. Further, the cup typically has the same general volume as the can. Therefore, the patron often spills some of the beer as he walks back to his seat (especially if he is carrying more than one cup). With the inventive container **10**, the server can twist off or otherwise remove removable cover **20** and hand the container **10** to the patron. With the cover **20** gone, the patron essentially has a cup and with the extra space created by recess **22**, spillage is less likely. If desired, the server can give the cover **20** to the patron so the container **10** can be resealed. Furthermore, the bevel **34** makes the containers **10** stackable, which further decreases spillage after the container **10** has been opened.

In another embodiment, the container can be filled with wine. Wine is more enjoyable when the top opening of the drinking container (e.g., wine glass) is large enough for a user's nose to fit therein. With traditional cans, this is not possible because of the small opening. Furthermore, wine drinkers often swirl the wine within the container to release the aroma. With the present invention, because the entire cover is removed and there is space created by recess **22**, a user can both swirl the contents without worry of spillage and can fit his/her nose in the open top of the container.

It will be appreciated that modifications can be made to the embodiments described herein without deviating from the scope of the present invention. For example, the main body portion of the container can be a shape other than cylindrical or round, such as ovular, square, rectangular or the like, the removable cover can be secured in place in other manners, such as snap or press fit.

With reference to FIGS. **28-36**, another preferred embodiment of a beverage container **10***f* with a removable and

recessed cover **20***f*. FIGS. **28-31** show the container **10***f* and cover **20***f* in a first or original position (i.e., the position when a user purchases the container). As shown, the container **10***f* includes a generally frusto-conical main body portion **12** having an open top **14**, a closed bottom **16**, an interior **18**, and the recessed removable cover **20***f*. In a preferred embodiment, the bottom **16** includes a circular contact surface **30** that surrounds a non-contact portion **32** extending therebetween. In a preferred embodiment, the non-contact portion **32** has a continuous concave shape.

The cover **20***f* includes a bottom **21**, a side wall **36** extending upwardly from the bottom **21**, an annular flange **63** and a collar **64**. The bottom **21** and side wall **36** cooperate to define a cover cavity **62**. The cover cavity **62** generally is the volume below the annular flange **63** when the removable cover is in the original position (see FIG. **29**).

Generally, in use, a standard volume of beverage fills the volume below the removable cover **20**. A user can then remove the removable cover **20***f* and place other items or additives, such as alcohol, ice or other mixer into the container **10** without overflowing the container **10** (due to recess **22**). In an exemplary embodiment, the beverage can take up about 80% of the volume of the container **10**, thus leaving about 20% for ice or other liquid, etc. after the removable cover **20** is removed.

As is best shown in FIG. **29**, in a preferred embodiment, the container **10***f* includes a bulge section **65** that provides a place for a user to hold the container **10***f* and a rim **28** that is formed by the material forming the main body portion **12** (e.g., aluminum) being rolled or bent to the outside thereof. The removable cover **20***f* includes threads **46** that mate with corresponding threads **48** on the interior surface of the main body portion **12**. In a preferred embodiment, the threads **48** are short interrupted threads to reduce turbulence while drinking. However, this is not a limitation and the threads **48** can be longer or continuous. As shown in FIG. **29**, in a preferred embodiment, the rim **28** includes a downwardly depending portion **29** that extends downwardly enough on the outside of the main body portion **12** to hide, cover or conceal the threads **48**. In other words, the threads **48** are positioned at a first height H**1** and the bottom edge of the downwardly depending portion **29** of the rim is positioned at a second height H**2**, and the first height H**1** is greater than the second height H**2**. In the first position, the collar **64** extends over and outside of the rim **28**. In use, the beverage container **10** may include a tamper evident seal around the collar **64** and the portion of the main body portion **12** adjacent thereto.

The collar **64** together with the annular flange **63** and the side wall **36** define first and second channels **65** and **67** that receive the rim **28** when it is positioned on the main body portion **12** in the first and second positions, respectively.

FIGS. **31-33** show the removable cover **20***f* in a second or inverted position. This position is typically utilized after the initial removal of the removable cover **20***f*. For example, if ice or other liquid has been added to the contents of the container **10**, the level of liquid may be too high to put the removable cover **20***f* back on in the first position. Therefore, the removable cover **20***f* is inverted and placed on the top of the main body portion **12**. This can be done to allow the contents to be shaken or to prevent spillage. Two different ways of inverting the removable cover **20***f* and connecting it to the top of the cylindrical main body portion **12** are shown in the drawings. The first embodiment (see FIG. **32**) is essentially a press, friction or tight fit on the top of the cylindrical main body portion **12**, where the collar **64** squeezes against the rim **28**. In the second embodiment, (see FIG. **33**), once the removable cover **20***f* is inverted, a second set of threads **66** are provided that mate with threads **48** on the main body portion **12**. In other embodiments, the removable cover **20***f* can be secured to the top of the main body portion **12** by other methods, e.g., snap fit, pliable protrusions, etc.

FIGS. **34-35** show the removable cover **20***f* on the bottom of the cylindrical main body portion **12** (a third or bottom position). In a preferred embodiment, the removable cover **20***f* is held on the bottom of the main body portion **12** by a press or friction fit. In another embodiment, the removable cover **20***f* can be secured to the bottom of the main body portion **12** by a threaded or snap fit or any other type of fit. With this configuration, the removable cover **20***f* can be disposed of with the main body portion **12** and not discarded separately. In a preferred embodiment, to provide stability, the concavity of the bottom **21** of the lid matches the concavity of the bottom of the cylindrical main body portion **12**.

FIG. **36** shows an embodiment similar to the one shown in FIG. **33**, but where the removable cover **20***f* includes a drinking opening **68** with a removable, pivotable or hingeable tab **70**. Therefore, once the removable cover **20***f* is inverted, and the tab **70** is removed or otherwise moved from the drinking opening **68**, a user can drink through the exposed drinking opening **68**.

FIGS. **37**A-**37**F show different exemplary embodiments beverage containers **10** with removable recessed covers **20**. FIG. **37**A shows a beverage container **10***g* having a removable cover **20***g* that seals to the main body portion **12** via a barb seal **72** that provides a seal with downward pressure from the removable cover **20***g*. The barb seal **72** also provides a compliant sealing surface, which can be advantageous if there are any irregularities in the main body portion **12**. Multiple barb seals can be provided for redundancy. FIG. **37**B shows a beverage container **10***h* having a threaded removable cover **20***h* that abuts a shoulder **74** in the main body portion **12** that includes a disc seal **76**. FIG. **37**C shows a beverage container **10***i* having a removable cover **20***i* that seals to the main body portion **12** via an o-ring seal **78**. FIG. **37**D shows a beverage container **10***j* having a threaded removable cover **20***j* that includes a seal **80** that extends around the rim **28** that abuts a shoulder **74** in the main body portion **12**. FIG. **37**E shows a beverage container **10***k* having a removable cover **20***k* and associated main body portion **12** that include a rim **28** that flares outwardly. A seal **81** is provided between the rim **28** and the removable cover **20***k*. FIG. **37**F shows a beverage container **10**L having a threaded removable cover **20**L that abuts a bevel **82** in the main body portion **12** that includes a seal **83**.

FIGS. **38-39** show an expandable beverage container **10***m*. In this embodiment, the beverage container **10***m* includes a spout **84** with threads **46** that rotate on internal threads **48** on the interior of the main body portion **12**. The top of the spout **84** includes a lid **86** that is hingedly connected thereto and covers a drinking opening **87**. Alternatively, the spout can include a peel off or twist off top instead of the hinged lid. In a preferred embodiment, the spout **84** seals at the top and bottom of the threaded bottom when compressed and expanded, respectively.

In use, a user expands the volume of the container **10***m* by unscrewing the spout **84** to the stop point, and then the lid **86** is moved from a closed position to an open position. Ice or other additive can then be added to the beverage within the container **10***m*.

FIG. **40** shows two beverage containers **10** with graphics or indicia **88** on the outside thereof. In a preferred embodiment, the indicia **88** shows ice cubes. This helps remind a consumer that after the recessed top **20** is removed, that there is room for ice to be added to the beverage container **10**. FIG. **40** also shows the nesting capability of the beverage containers **10**.

FIG. **41** shows another embodiment of an expandable beverage container **10***n* that includes spout **84** with threads **46** that rotate on internal threads **48** on the interior of the main body portion **12**. The top of the spout **84** includes lid **86** that is hingedly connected thereto and covers drinking opening **87**. In a preferred embodiment, bottom seal **90** and to seal **92** are included so that the container is sealed at the bottom and top of its rotational and expandable motion.

FIG. **42** shows another preferred embodiment of a beverage container **10***o* that includes a removable lid **94** that covers or seals the cover cavity **62** in the removable cover **20***o* to define a cover interior **96**. The cover interior **96** can be used to store any desired item. For example, as shown in FIGS. **42-43**, the cover interior **96** can include food items, such as cookies, biscotti, marshmallows, muffins, cream and sugar packets, etc. In another embodiment, the cover interior **96** can include a liquid, such as a mixer for mixing with the liquid or beverage in the main body portion **12**. In another embodiment, the cover interior **96** can include powdered ingredients, such as energy drinks, coffee, tea, etc. Therefore, the container can be sold with water inside and then the powder can be poured in (after removing the lid **94**) and then mixed. In another embodiment, the cover interior **96** can include nuts or pretzels, which can be given away or sold together with a can of soda or other beverage on an airplane. Other items such as toys, trinkets, give aways, etc. can also be positioned in the cover interior **96**. Any item positioned within the cover interior **96** is within the scope of the present invention. In another embodiment, the container **10** can include chips and salsa. In another embodiment, the removable cover can be used as a cup with the main body portion used as the pitcher or the like.

As shown in FIG. **43**, in a preferred embodiment the lid **94** is secured on the annular flange **63**. In another embodiment, a separate shoulder can be provided for securing the lid thereto. The lid **94** can include a tab **98** to provide a user with a place to pull off the lid **94**. In another embodiment, the lid **94** can be secured to the collar **64**.

Many variations on the beverage containers **10** taught herein are within the scope of the invention. For example, the rim **28** can be formed by rolling the material inside or outside. Also, the rims shown in the drawings are generally round. However, they can also be squared or flattened (as shown in FIG. **37**F). Furthermore, the shape of the main body portion can be provided according to what type of beverage is being offered therein. For example, the main body portion **12** can be shaped as a cylinder, with a taper, as a cylinder at the top and tapered downwardly therefrom, as a tapered tulip shape, a British/Nonic pint shape, a British tulip pint shape, a stepped taper or a tapered tulip chalice, for example.

Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, throughout the description and the claims, the words "comprise," "comprising," and the like are to be construed in an inclusive sense, as opposed to an exclusive or exhaustive sense; that is to say, in the sense of "including, but not limited to." As used herein, the terms "connected," "coupled," or any variant thereof, means any connection or coupling, either direct or indirect, between two or more elements; the coupling of connection between the elements can be physical, logical, or a combination thereof. Additionally, the words "herein," "above," "below," and words of similar import, when used in this application, shall refer to this application as a whole and not to any particular portions of this application. Where the context permits, words in the above Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments using the singular or plural number may also include the plural or singular number respectively. The word "or" in reference to a list of two or more items, covers all of the following interpretations of the word: any of the items in the list, all of the items in the list, and any combination of the items in the list.

The above-detailed description of embodiments of the disclosure is not intended to be exhaustive or to limit the teachings to the precise form disclosed above. While specific embodiments of and examples for the disclosure are described above for illustrative purposes, various equivalent modifications are possible within the scope of the disclosure, as those skilled in the relevant art will recognize. For example, while processes are presented in a given order, alternative embodiments may perform routines having steps in a different order, and some steps may be deleted, moved, added, subdivided, combined, and/or modified to provide alternative or subcombinations. Each of these processes may be implemented in a variety of different ways. Also, while processes are at times shown as being performed in series, these processes may instead be performed in parallel, or may be performed, at different times. Further any specific numbers noted herein are only examples: alternative implementations may employ differing values or ranges.

Any patents and applications and other references noted above, including any that may be listed in accompanying filing papers, are incorporated herein by reference in their entirety. Aspects of the disclosure can be modified, if necessary, to employ the systems, functions, and concepts of the various references described above to provide yet further embodiments of the disclosure.

These and other changes can be made to the disclosure in light of the above Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments. While the above description describes certain embodiments of the disclosure, and describes the best mode contemplated, no matter how detailed the above appears in text, the teachings can be practiced in many ways. Details of the system may vary considerably in its implementation details, while still being encompassed by the subject matter disclosed herein. As noted above, particular terminology used when describing certain features or aspects of the disclosure should not be taken to imply that the terminology is being redefined herein to be restricted to any specific characteristics, features or aspects of the disclosure with which that terminology is associated. In general, the terms used in the following claims should not be construed to limit the disclosures to the specific embodiments disclosed in the specification unless the above Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments section explicitly defines such terms. Accordingly, the actual scope of the disclosure encompasses not only the disclosed embodiments, but also all equivalent ways of practicing or implementing the disclosure under the claims.

Accordingly, although exemplary embodiments of the invention have been shown and described, it is to be understood that all the terms used herein are descriptive rather than limiting, and that many changes, modifications, and substitutions may be made by one having ordinary skill in the art without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A beverage container comprising:

a main body portion having an open top and a closed bottom and defining an interior, wherein the main body portion includes an integrally formed downwardly depending portion folded over therefrom, a circular rim and a first set of threads on an inside surface thereof that are positioned adjacent the rim at a first height, wherein the downwardly depending portion extends downwardly from the rim along an outside surface of the main body portion and includes a bottom edge that is positioned below the first set of threads, and wherein the main body portion defines a first volume, and

a removable cover that includes a bottom, a generally cylindrical side wall, an annular flange extending outwardly from the generally cylindrical side wall, and an annular collar, wherein the collar, the annular flange and the generally cylindrical side wall define a first channel that receives the rim, wherein the bottom and the generally cylindrical side wall cooperate to define a cover cavity, wherein the generally cylindrical side wall includes a second set of threads on an outside surface thereof that are matingly engaged with the first set of threads on the main body portion.

2. A beverage container comprising:

a main body portion having an open top and a closed bottom and defining an interior, wherein the main body portion includes a circular rim and a first set of threads on an inside surface thereof that are positioned adjacent the rim at a first height, wherein the rim includes a downwardly depending portion that extends below the first set of threads, and wherein the main body portion defines a first volume, and

a removable cover that includes a bottom, a generally cylindrical side wall, an annular flange extending outwardly from the generally cylindrical side wall, and an annular collar, wherein the collar, the annular flange and the generally cylindrical side wall define a first channel that receives the rim, wherein the bottom and the generally cylindrical side wall cooperate to define a cover cavity, wherein the generally cylindrical side wall includes a second set of threads on an outside surface thereof that are matingly engaged with the first set of threads on the main body portion, wherein the collar and the annular flange define a second channel opposed to the first channel, and wherein the removable cover can be inverted from an original position where the rim is received in the first channel to an inverted position such that the rim is received in the second channel.

3. The beverage container of claim **2** wherein the collar is dimensioned such that when the removable cover is in the inverted position the collar provides a friction fit on top of the main body portion.

4. The beverage container of claim **2** wherein the generally cylindrical side wall includes a third set of threads that are matingly engaged with the first set of threads when the removable cover is in the inverted position.

5. The beverage container of claim **1** wherein the removable cover can be moved from an original position where the rim is received in the first channel to a bottom position where the bottom of the main body portion is received in the cover cavity, and wherein the generally cylindrical side wall is dimensioned to provide a friction fit with the main body portion in the bottom position.

6. The beverage container of claim **4** wherein the removable cover can be moved from an original position where the rim is received in the first channel to a bottom position where the bottom of the main body portion is received in the cover cavity, and wherein the generally cylindrical side wall is dimensioned to provide a friction fit with the main body portion in the bottom position.

7. The beverage container of claim **1** further comprising a recess defined between the bottom of the removable cover and the open top of the main body portion, wherein the recess defines a second volume that is between about 5% and about 50% of the first volume.

8. The beverage container of claim **1** wherein the first set of threads are positioned at a first height, wherein the downwardly depending portion of the rim includes a bottom edge that is positioned at a second height, and wherein the first height is greater than the second height.

9. The beverage container of claim **2** wherein the removable cover is sealed with respect to the main body portion in both the original position and the inverted position.

10. The beverage container of claim **1** wherein the removable cover further includes a removable lid that covers the cover cavity and defines a cover interior, and wherein an item is positioned in the cover interior.

11. The beverage container of claim **1** wherein the main body portion includes a bulge section.

12. The beverage container of claim **1** wherein the first channel receives the rim and at least a portion of the downwardly depending portion.

13. The beverage container of claim **1** wherein the first set of threads form indentations in the outer surface of the main body portion, and wherein the downwardly depending portion hides the indentations.

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